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ABSTRACT

This document contains six papers exploring contemporary issues in mentoring. "The Practice, Quality, and Cost of Mentoring" (Jean Baldwin Grossman) provides an introduction to and overview of the remaining five papers. "Mentoring Adolescents: What Have We Learned?" (Cynthia L. Sipe) reviews the literature on mentoring, discusses key elements in creating solid mentor-mentee relationships, and explains what is required to be an effective mentor. "Assessing the Effectiveness of Mentoring Programs" (Jean Baldwin Grossman, Amy Johnson) shares the results of a study in which the authors documented that the most effective mentoring relationships are those where mentors seek mentees' input and do not take punitive approaches to mentees. "The Cost of Mentoring" (Douglas L. Fountain, Amy Arbreton) present data demonstrating that one-on-one and group mentoring programs cost an average of just over $1,000 and $400 annually per youth, respectively. "Mentoring Matters: A National Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People" (Kathryn Taaffe McLearn, Diane Colasanto, Cathy Schoen, Michele Yellowitz Shapiro) reports that approximately 12 million adults are currently mentoring young people aged 10-18 (primarily outside of formal programs). "Mentoring in 1998: Four Models for the 21st Century" (Natalie Jaffe) highlights issues currently being faced by four exemplary mentoring programs. (The document contains 30 references.) (MN)

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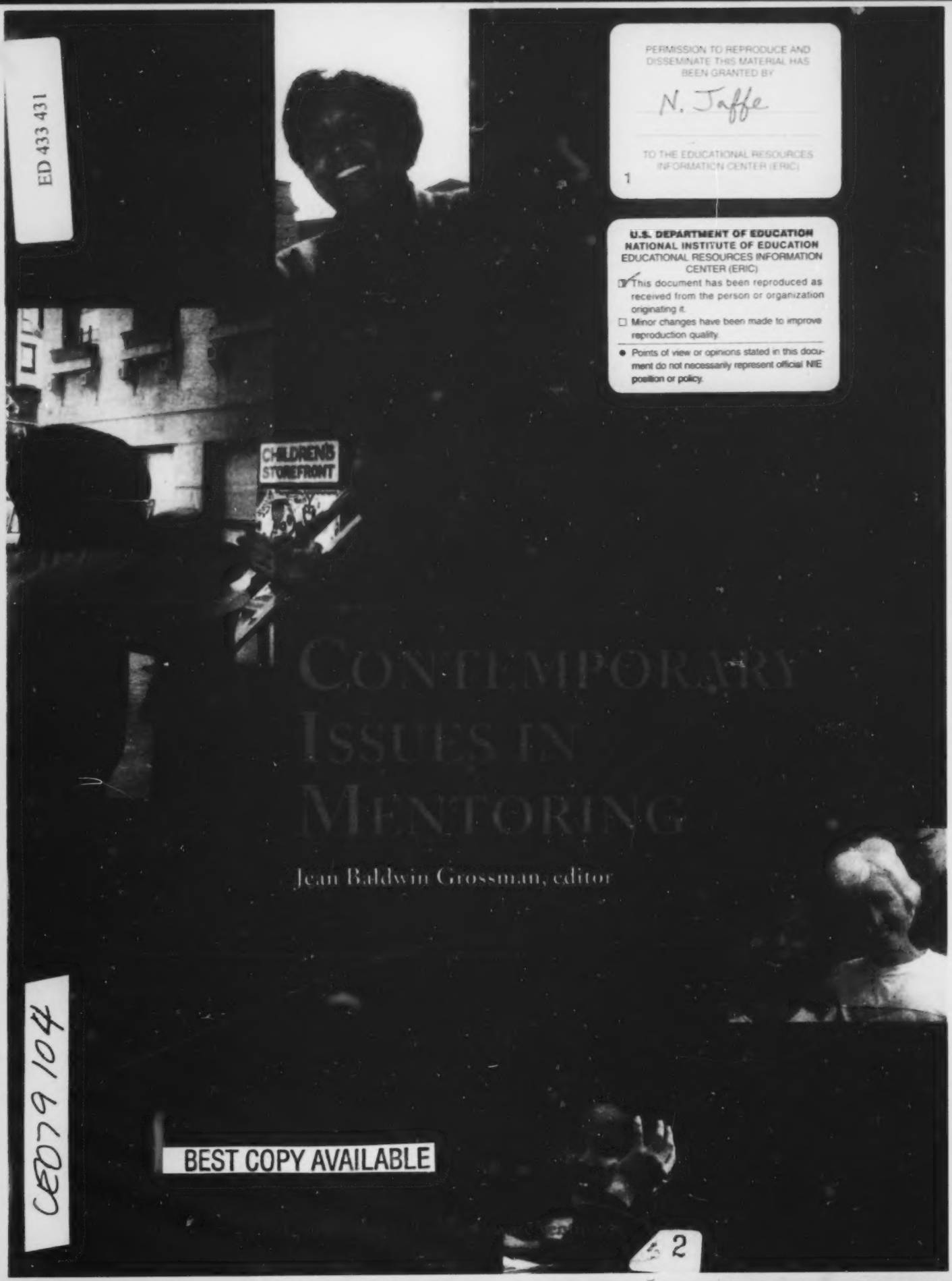

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN MENTORING

Jean Baldwin Grossman, editor

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CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN MENTORING

Acknowledgments

This study was generously supported by The Commonwealth Fund, a New York City-based private independent foundation, though the views presented here are those of the authors and not necessarily those of The Commonwealth Fund, its directors, officers or staff.

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At P/PV, President Gary Walker contributed mightily in conceptualizing the project and selecting the topics that should be covered. Anne Roder spent many hours working with the authors to ensure timely delivery of the chapters. In addition to writing a wonderful chapter, Natalie Jaffe edited the entire volume; Patricia Wieland copyedited it, Maxine Sherman coordinated its publication and Malish & Pagonis did superb design work. Audrey Walmsley deserves a special thanks for being the hub of this project: she worked with authors, planned and coordinated the symposium that was held to review these chapters, typed all of the chapters, made sure everyone got paid or reimbursed, and kept us all in line and on time. It was a Herculean job done very well.

To ensure that the chapters were extensively reviewed, authors presented their chapters at a symposium attended by mentoring program operators, key federal and philanthropic funders, and experts in the mentoring field. We would like to thank all the participants for their valuable comments, many of which were incorporated into the chapters. Special thanks are due to those who prepared comments, presented them at the conference and led spirited discussions: Hugh Price, President of the National Urban League; Michael Gerson, Senior Editor of *US News & World Report;* Shay Bilchik, Administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; Gail Manza, Executive Director of The National Mentoring Partnership; Marc Freedman, President of Civic Ventures; Thomas McKenna, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America; Saul Cooperman, President of 10,000 Mentors; Debra A. Kahn, Executive Director of Philadelphia Futures (Sponsor-A-Scholar); and Deborah Knight-Kerr, Director of Johns Hopkins Community and Education Projects (Hospital Youth Mentoring Program).

This volume commemorates 15 years of The Commonwealth Fund's support for mentoring and efforts to evaluate the role of mentoring in helping disadvantaged young people make a successful transition to postsecondary education or work. We hope it both documents the current state of knowledge on mentoring and explore new issues, such as costs and quality benchmarks, which are critical if quality mentoring is to be expanded to reach more youth.

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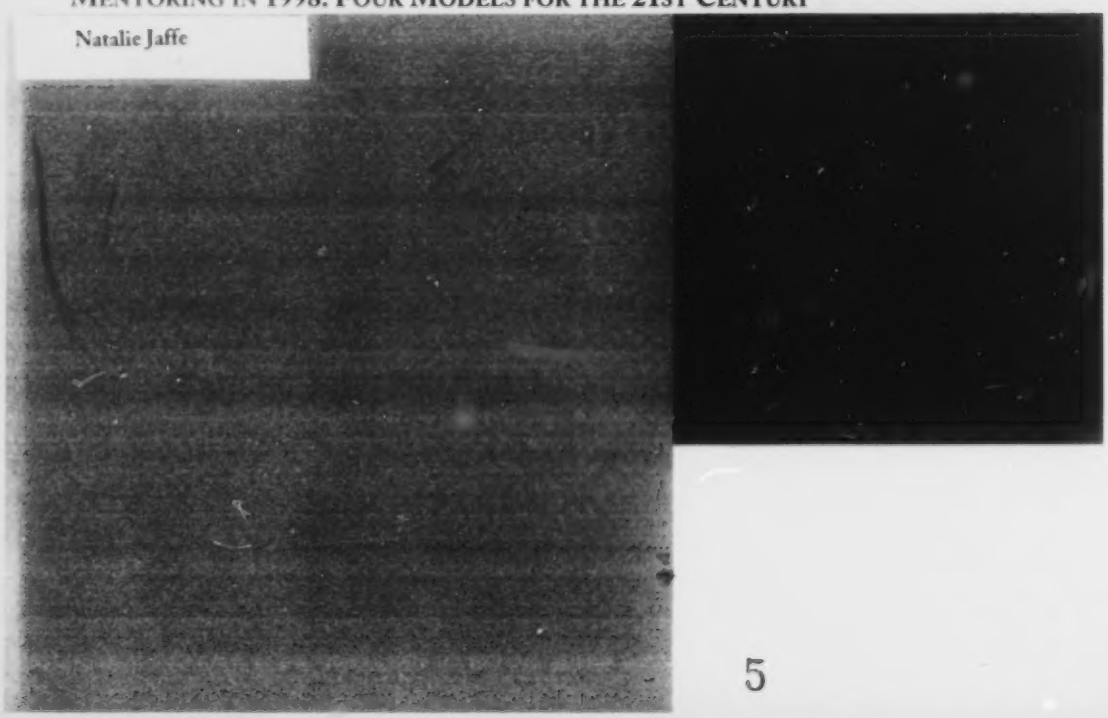

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The Practice, Quality and Cost of Mentoring

Jean Baldwin Grossman

Today mentoring has the limelight, having been widely accepted as a valuable activity for youth. There is solid evidence that well-run mentoring programs can change youth's life trajectories, reduce drug and alcohol use, and improve academic behaviors. America's civil consciousness is going through one of its periodic reawakenings, as seen by the increasing number of schools that are requiring their students to participate in community service and voluntarism. Mentoring is poised to benefit. The President's Summit on the Future of America, held in Philadelphia in 1997, and many local summits held nationwide since that time have heightened citizens' awareness of the needs of our youth and highlighted the potential of mentoring to meet those needs.

But good press, good intentions and earnest desire alone will not enable mentoring to reach its full potential. We still have barriers to overcome and operational questions to answer:

- What are the essential elements of an effective mentoring program?
- How do you know and document a quality mentoring program when you see it?
- What does mentoring cost?
- Where do we find volunteers?

Without answers to such key questions, mentoring's potential will never be fully realized. The studies presented in this volume, sponsored by The Commonwealth Fund, illuminate these critical issues.

Just because a program proclaims it does mentoring does not mean it is effective. In fact, many mentoring programs do not even create many long-lasting relationships, let alone change youth's lives. Big Brothers Big Sisters, Sponsor-A-Scholar, and other mentoring programs discussed in this volume have been shown effective. These programs can and should be expanded. But many localities have started and will continue to start their own mentoring programs. Local adaptation is often necessary if the program is to meet adequately the needs of the community. In addition, policymakers, funders and local operators often prefer to invent new programs rather than operate or expand a proven program. Thus, given that programs across the country vary in content and structure, it is important for program designers to know what program practices are essential to promoting and preserving the desired levels of effectiveness.

Surveying the literature on mentoring, Sipe (Chapter 1) finds that the studies all agree on critical program practices. She discusses the three areas that are essential to the success of any mentoring program: screening, orientation and training, and support and supervision. The screening process provides programs with an opportunity to select those adults most likely to be successful as mentors by looking for volunteers who can realistically keep their commitment and who understand the need to earn the trust of their young mentee. Orientation and training ensure that youth and mentors share a common understanding of the adult's role and help mentors develop realistic expectations of what they can accomplish. Ongoing support and supervision of the matches help the pairs negotiate the inevitable bumps in the relationship so that they have a chance to develop rather than dissolve prematurely.

Sipe found that programs incorporating the three key elements created solid relationships, which, in turn, relative to other similar youth, improved mentee's attitudes toward school and their future, and often improved their behavior and performance as well, regardless of the programs' explicit goals (i.e., improvement in academic performance, decrease in drug use or friendship). The studies also show that these types of programs decreased their participants' antisocial behaviors, such as drug and alcohol use, relative to their peers. Mentoring programs missing one or more of the three critical elements had more difficulty establishing good relationships in large numbers and did not produce the positive effects of mentoring.

Sipe also provides information on what it takes to be an effective mentor. Mentors need to be a steady and involved presence in the lives of the youth with whom they work; they need to respect the youth's views and desires; they need to become acquainted, but not overly involved, with the parent(s); and they need to seek and use advice and support from program staff. Echoing these results, Grossman and Johnson (Chapter 2) find more positive effects among pairs who inter-

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acted more frequently, in which the mentors sought the input of the youth, and in which the mentor did not take punitive approaches with the youth.

Grossman and Johnson's study also reinforced the finding that durability and persistence of the relationship are important. Their results confirmed that the longer matches lasted, the more effects mentoring had; but matches that ended in less than three months harmed youth. The Commonwealth National Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People (Chapter 4) helps explain the growing effects of mentoring over time by finding that as relationships continue the youth are more open to receiving a larger array of support, advice and guidance from the mentor.

How can local program staff determine for themselves (for programmatic reasons) and document for others (funders in particular) that they are effective? While banks and venture capitalists are willing to finance a potentially profitable company in return for a share of the profits, mentoring offers no financial profit to its backers. Instead, local mentoring programs must convince funders—corporate, philanthropic, governmental, individuals—to redirect their dollars from other uses toward mentoring. Thus, these programs need measures and accountability techniques by which they can convincingly demonstrate that their programs produce positive effects. Without these measures, sustainable funding and program refinement becomes very difficult.

Grossman and Johnson discuss and provide three types of measures that mentoring programs can use to assess their own effectiveness: changes in participant outcomes, measures of effective relationships and descriptions of participant characteristics. Directly measuring change in specific outcomes is what many think of as the only way to demonstrate program effectiveness. However, youth behaviors and attitudes change over time as a result of maturation, not just program effectiveness. In order to interpret changes in outcomes correctly, operators need to have examples of typical changes against which they can compare the changes they measure. Chapter 2 provides examples of these typical changes. In addition, the chapter provides program operators with other techniques with which to evaluate their programs, in particular, benchmarks of programmatic quality—which is often easier to measure—yet are empirically linked to impacts on academic behavior, initiation of drug and alcohol use, and self-esteem. These benchmarks include length of relationship, frequency of contact, and various measures of the quality of the relationship (as perceived by the youth and program staff).

How much does mentoring cost? While it appears to be relatively inexpensive for a social policy intervention, it is not free. Yet little is known about the cost of mentoring and how this relates to program features, such as overall size or whether group or one-on-one mentoring is offered. This crucial gap in knowledge seriously impedes discussions about expanding quality mentoring. Fountain and Arbreton's chapter on the cost of mentoring (Chapter 3), is an important contribution to the field. This chapter examines the cost of 52 mentoring programs and finds that the median cost of a one-on-one program is just over $1,000 per year per youth, while the median annual cost of a group program is just over $400 per youth. They also find that costs per youth do not decrease with the size of the program but are relatively constant.

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The cost figures are premised on receiving a large amount of volunteer time (from mentors). To enhance our understanding about how many adults mentor youth, who the mentors and their youth are, and why the volunteers got involved, The Commonwealth Fund commissioned a nationally representative survey of American adults. The chapter by McLearn, Colasanto, Schoen and Yellowitz Shapiro (Chapter 4) reports that approximately 6 percent of adults (about 12 million) mentor youth ages 10 to 18, most of them informally (outside of programs). Mentors tend to be somewhat more educated, to have somewhat more income, and to be more likely to have been mentored themselves as youth than are non-mentors. The youth who are mentored (both through programs and informally) come from all socioeconomic situations, but many of them are experiencing trouble.

The youth with informal mentors are typically relatives or young neighbors who have experienced some trauma or trouble. The adult identifies the youth as a promising young person in need, wants to help and befriends him or her. These caring adults are undoubtedly tremendously important to the approximately 10 million youth they mentor. But, if as Dryfoos' estimates (1998:35), 60 percent of youth are at risk of "not making it," this leaves approximately 10 million 10- to 18-year-olds who are in need of additional support. And, unfortunately, many of the neediest youth do not have access to informal mentors, having neither stable families nor homes in neighborhoods with good social networks.

The survey found that mentoring is not an unusual volunteer activity for adults who volunteer with children and youth. Thus, programs seeking to expand and recruit new mentors might look to those volunteering for other community activities with children and youth or those who have informally mentored youth in the past.

The last chapter in this volume highlights issues currently being faced by four exemplary programs: 10,000 Mentors, an elementary school-based program in Newark, New Jersey; the Hospital Youth Mentoring Program, an employer-sponsored program; Sponsor-A-Scholar, an academically targeted mentoring program for high school students; and Big Brothers Big Sisters, the preeminent mentoring program in the nation, which is currently trying several new forms of mentoring. The common issues confronting these mentoring programs are maintenance or expansion of their programs, funding, recruitment of volunteers, and a system for continuing assessment of results, which is vital to success in attracting money and mentors. Chapter 5 describes what it is like to be involved with mentoring programs from the perspective of the youth, the mentors and the staff. It reflects the real world needs of programs for the type of information presented in this volume.

Mentoring has much going for it. It is simple and makes sense. It relies primarily on volunteers and thus is relatively inexpensive. It is not a government program. And by drawing on individuals' best motives—to provide a helping hand to a child—and making links between people, it makes citizens more civilly concerned and engaged.

Michael Gerson of *U.S. News and World Report* commenting on mentoring, has said that "discovering" a role for mentoring in the social policy arena has been "the single greatest policy insight in the last century." While not all of us would go that far, mentoring offers a positive approach to service provision that decreases youth's destructive behaviors and negative outcomes

by encouraging them to develop constructively. It can be a freestanding intervention (such as the Juvenile Mentoring Program, JUMP) or it can be incorporated into practically any existing youth program.

But, as this volume points out, the full potential of mentoring will not be reached effortlessly. We need to be vigilant about providing adequate infrastructure and training in mentoring programs if they are to be an effective vehicle for voluntarism. We need to find more mentors, perhaps by lowering the barriers to volunteering (while maintaining high standards) or perhaps by having adults mentor more than one youth. Finally, we need to find more funding for mentoring. Existing programs do a great job of fundraising from the United Way, special events, schools and businesses, but private sources alone are simply inadequate to meet the needs.

In the past, the government has spent money to put 100,000 new police officers on the street and 100,000 new teachers in schools. If the government spent an equivalent amount on mentoring programs putting mentors on the streets and in youth organizations during the crucial afternoon, early evening and weekend hours, millions of youth could greatly benefit from this adult attention.

Notes

Safe Passage: Making It Through Adolescence in a Risky Society, Joy G. Dryfoos, 1998:35.

Five billion dollars hires 100,000 police officers at a salary of $50,000 per year. If enough volunteers could be found, $5 billion would support 50 million matches a year at $1,000 a match. If mentors were hired at $15 per hour for three hours a day Monday through Friday and eight hours a day on Saturday and Sunday, they could mentor nine youth for approximately $25,000. Adding $1,000 per youth for supervision and matching costs, $5 billion could be used to hire approximately 150,000 mentors and provide mentoring to 1.3 million youth. If programs using both paid and volunteer mentors were pursued, between one million and 50 million youth could be served. (See the February 23, 1996, speech of Hugh Price, president of the National Urban League, New York, for a similar cost analysis of youth workers.)

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Mentoring Adolescents: What Have We Learned?

Cynthia L. Sipe

In 1983, Margaret Mahoney, then president of The Commonwealth Fund, called for a "renaissance of mentoring" to counteract the lack of caring, mature adults in the lives of many young people. Mahoney suggested that the "absence of traditional family and community linkages to bring younger people together with older ones means that our society must find a new strategy to create these linkages" (1983:9). In the 15 years since Mahoney's exhortation, numerous individuals and programs have sought to do just that, and the number of programs offering mentors to disadvantaged youth has grown astronomically.

While mentoring as a concept can be traced to the ancient Greeks (Freedman, 1992) and is a long-standing practice in the development of young professionals, providing at-risk adolescents with mentors who could help them develop as individuals is a relatively new practice. As such, the growth of mentoring in this context was accompanied by a range of questions. Could unrelated adults really make a difference in the lives of disadvantaged youth? What would these relationships look like; would they mirror "natural" mentoring relationships that develop spontaneously? What could and should programs do to facilitate the development of successful and effective relationships? How many youth could benefit from having a mentor? Are there enough adults willing to volunteer to meet the need?

To address these and other questions, researchers have studied a wide range of mentoring programs over the past 15 years. Many have attempted to document the benefits youth derive from participation in programmatically developed mentoring relationships. Others have focused on the nature of mentoring relationships and the practices of effective

mentors compared with those who are less successful. And much attention has been paid to defining best practices for programs—the structures and supports necessary to ensure quality mentoring. This paper presents a summary of what we have learned to date. Although the paper draws heavily on P/PV's research, synthesized by Sipe (1996), it also expands on that work by including findings reported by numerous other researchers.

Research does NOT indicate that ANY mentoring relationship or program produces benefits. Required are frequent meetings over time; close, supportive relationships; and program structures that promote these conditions.

WHAT IMPACT DOES MENTORING HAVE ON YOUTH?

Since the growth of mentoring programs for disadvantaged youth began in the early 1980s, a number of studies have been conducted to determine the benefits for youth of participation in such programs. As a result, the field has gradually built a body of evidence confirming that programmatic mentoring can have many positive benefits.

This research has been conducted on programs with various target populations: Project RAISE, Across Ages and TeamWorks serve middle school students (VanPatten, 1997; LoSciuto et al., 1996; McPartland and Nettles, 1991); Career Beginnings and Sponsor-A-Scholar (SAS) target high school students (Johnson, 1998; Cave and Quint, 1990); and Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) serves youth aged 5 to 18, although the impact evaluation focused on youth aged 10 to 15 (Tierney and Grossman, 1995). These programs also represent a range of program goals. Many, including RAISE, Career Beginnings, SAS and TeamWorks, hope to improve various academic outcomes ranging from attendance and grades to rates of college enrollment; Across Ages is a substance abuse prevention program; and mentoring pairs in BBBS develop individualized goals, including improved academic outcomes, better relationships with family and friends, and reduction or prevention of antisocial activities (for example, substance use and delinquent behavior). Program structures also vary: BBBS is primarily a one-on-one mentoring program, while TeamWorks is the only group or team mentoring program included in this review. The remaining programs all include one-on-one mentoring as one component of a larger program.

The evaluation designs also vary across this set of studies. Evaluations of BBBS and Career Beginnings randomly assigned eligible youth to treatment and control groups and compared outcomes for these two groups over time. The Across Ages evaluation randomly assigned classes to one of three groups—a control group that received no intervention, a treatment group that participated in a drug prevention program but no mentoring, and a treatment group that participated in the same drug prevention program plus one-on-one mentoring. The Sponsor-A-Scholar evaluation used a carefully implemented matched comparison group strategy. Other studies developed comparison groups using less rigorous methods.

A review of the findings from all of these studies suggests that mentoring does have important benefits for the youth who participate in these programs. The BBBS evaluation (Tierney and Grossman, 1995) provides the most conclusive and wide-ranging evidence that one-on-one mentoring alone can make a difference in the lives of youth. Little Brothers and Little Sisters were 46 percent less likely than their control group counterparts to initiate drug use and 27 percent less likely to initiate alcohol use during the study period. They were less likely to hit someone and skipped only half as many days of school as did control youth. These youth felt more competent about their ability to do well in school and received slightly higher grades by the end of the study. And they reported more posi-

tive relationships with their friends and with their parents. These results were found for both boys and girls and across races.

The Career Beginnings (Cave and Quint, 1990) and Sponsor-A-Scholar (Johnson, 1998) evaluations both addressed the effectiveness of broader, academically oriented programs that include one-on-one mentoring as one component among a range of services offered to high school students, including academic support, assistance with college applications, and, in the case of SAS, financial support for college expenses. Students participating in SAS improved their academic performance: they earned higher GPAs in tenth and eleventh (but not twelfth) grades than did students in the comparison group and were more likely to participate in college preparatory activities. Participants in both programs were more likely to attend college during the first year after high school graduation than were nonparticipants. And length-of-stay in college increased for Career Beginnings students.

Across Ages (LoSciuto et al., 1996) is a substance abuse prevention program that targets sixth-grade students. The program combines community service, a life-skills curriculum and parent workshops with one-on-one mentoring by older adults. The evaluation compared outcomes for students who participated in all components of the program with those who participated in all components except mentoring and with students who did not participate in the program at all. The students who had mentors had better attitudes toward school, toward the future and toward elders than did youth in the other two groups. These youth also used substances less frequently and had somewhat better school attendance than did youth who did not participate in the program.

The evaluation of Project RAISE (McPartland and Nettles, 1991) found that program participants (middle school youth) had somewhat better grades and attendance than did youth not involved with the program. Although the evaluation design makes it difficult to isolate the effects of mentoring, the researchers concluded that the results suggest mentoring is an

The Benefits of High Quality Mentoring

One-on-One Mentoring

Less likely to initiate drug and alcohol use
Less likely to hit someone
Skipped fewer days of school
Felt more competent about their ability to do well in school
Received slightly higher grades
Reported more positive relationships with friends and parents

One-on-One Mentoring embedded in a broader academically oriented program

Improved academic performance
More likely to participate in college preparatory activities
More likely to attend college immediately after high school graduation
Remained longer in college

One-on-One Mentoring embedded in a substance abuse prevention program

Better attitudes toward school and the future
Used substances less frequently
Better school attendance

Group Mentoring

Better attitudes toward school, their family and communities
Better school attendance

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important component of the program. Three of the studied programs with weak mentoring components showed no effects, while two with strong mentoring programs showed significant positive results.

TeamWorks is a group mentoring program in which a team of three adults (a classroom teacher, a college student and a community adult) are assigned to work with a group of 10 middle school youth. The evaluation, which used a comparison group strategy, found that participants had better attitudes toward school, their family and their communities. Participants also had better school attendance than did students in the comparison group.

Finally, Brown (1996) cites findings from several studies that suggest positive effects of mentoring for students.[1] Laughrey (1990) reports that students participating in a Florida high school mentoring program had improved school attendance and better test results. Brown (1994) found that Toronto students participating in the Change Your Future Program had lower dropout rates and higher credit accumulation than did comparable students. And Slicker and Palmer (1993) compared results for tenth-grade students who were "effectively" mentored with those who were "ineffectively" mentored relative to a control group that received no mentoring. Those students who were effectively mentored experienced higher academic achievement relative to control group youth, but ineffectively mentored students showed a decline in academic achievement.

Taken together, these results provide clear evidence that involvement in programmatically created relationships with unrelated adults can yield a wide range of tangible benefits for youth. What this research does not indicate, however, is that *any* mentoring relationship or program will produce these results. In addition to the findings reported by Slicker and Palmer regarding effectively mentored students, LoSciuto et al. (1996) found that students who were highly involved with their mentors had better school attendance than did youth whose mentors were less involved. McPartland and Nettles (1991) reported that programs with poorly implemented mentoring components were less likely to produce benefits for their participants. And P/PV's research on mentoring programs that are less structured than BBBS found that mentors in such programs are typically less prepared and less successful (Sipe, 1996). Further studies are needed to help develop benchmarks that can be used to judge whether a program has sufficient structure in place to optimize the development of successful relationships, increasing the likelihood of producing benefits for youth.

"(My mentor) helped me see what I wanted to do with my life."

"I'm not just passing, I'm doing well. And I have a very good friend."

The key to creating effective mentoring relationships lies in the development of trust, which takes a substantial amount of time.

MAKING RELATIONSHIPS WORK

A number of studies have looked at mentoring relationships to better understand why some matches are successful and others are not (Network Training and Research Group, 1996; Morrow and Styles, 1995; Mecartney et al., 1994; Styles and Morrow, 1992). One question is particularly important: What can mentors themselves do to ensure that a relationship is more likely to succeed? The findings across studies are fairly consistent about practices of effective mentors compared with those of less successful ones.

The key to creating effective mentoring relationships lies in the development of trust between two strangers of different ages (Sipe, 1996; Network Training and Research Group, 1996). Volunteers typically come to mentoring programs because they want to help youth. Without establishing trust, however, mentors can never truly support the youth with whom they interact. Learning to trust, especially for youth who have been let down before, requires time; youth cannot be expected to trust their mentor simply because program staff have put them together. Establishing communication and developing a relationship can often be a difficult process (Johnson, 1998). Mentors who follow a gradual path in building trust find that the types of support they can offer, and that will be accepted, broaden considerably once trust has been established.

The most critical factor in determining whether matches develop into satisfying and effective relationships characterized by high levels of trust is the approach of the mentor. Mentors who focus first on building trust and becoming a friend to their youth tend to be more effective than those who immediately try to change or reform the mentee. Adults whose attention is concentrated on reforming youth are often frustrated by their lack of receptivity. These volunteers make the mistake of pushing too hard and too quickly on youth's problems—pressing them to talk about sensitive issues before they are ready and ignoring the youth's desire to help set the agenda for the pair's activities. These mentors fail precisely because they are too focused on their own agenda.

Volunteers who take the time to develop real relationships with youth are much more likely to promote the changes that other volunteers only pursue. Effective mentors are more likely to engage in the following practices:

- They make a commitment to being consistent and dependable, to maintaining a steady presence in the youth's life. Almost every study reviewed (Johnson, 1998; VanPatten, 1997; Network Training and Research Group, 1996; Sipe, 1996) stresses the importance of the mentor's consistency and persistence. They recognize that the relationship may be fairly one-sided and take responsibility for keeping the relationship alive. P/PV's research (Morrow and Styles, 1995; Styles and Morrow, 1992) found that youth often test adults to determine whether they will actually stick around; successful mentors regularly initiated contact and ensured that meetings were scheduled, rather than waiting to hear from youth. Other research found that successful mentors exhibit an attitude of caring and wanting to do more for the mentee (Network Training and Research Group, 1996).
- They respect the youth's viewpoint. Effective mentors are open and flexible; they listen to what youth have to say and pay attention to what they think is important (Sipe, 1996; Network Training and Research Group, 1996).

Programs must provide the time and resources to adequately screen, train and support mentors.

Practices of Effective Mentoring

Effective mentors

- Maintain a steady presence in a youth's life
- Respect the youth's viewpoint
- Pay attention to kids' need for "fun"
- Get to know their mentees' families, but do not become too involved with them
- Seek and use the help and advice of program staff

Less effective mentors

- Do not meet with their mentees regularly
- Adopt an authoritative role
- Emphasize behavior change more than developing mutual trust and respect

- They involve the youth in deciding how the pair will spend their time together. Although youth are often reticent, successful mentors take the time to learn about the youth's interests and provide them with options for how to spend their time, rather than planning everything without input from the youth (Morrow and Styles, 1995).
- They pay attention to kids' need for "fun." Not only is having fun a key part of building a relationship, but it provides youth with valuable opportunities that are often precluded by their family situations (VanPatten, 1997; Network Training and Research Group, 1996; Morrow and Styles, 1995; Styles and Morrow, 1992).
- They tend to become acquainted with their mentees' families. Nonsupportive parents can sabotage these programmatic relationships; successful mentors have found it helpful to meet and interact with their mentees' parents (Network Training and Research Group, 1996; Johnson, 1998). At the same time, mentors have to guard against involvement with the family to an extent that could be detrimental to their relationship with the youth (Morrow and Styles, 1995).
- Finally, successful mentors seek and use the help and advice of program staff. These mentors recognize that they do not have all the answers and value the support and guidance that program staff can provide (Sipe, 1996).

"If she couldn't come, I'd feel bad."

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Less effective mentors tend not to follow any of these practices. In contrast, these volunteers tend to do the following:

- They have difficulty meeting with youth on a regular and consistent basis, often demanding that youth play an equal role in initiating contact. Unsuccessful mentors often complain that their youth do not call them to schedule meetings. Or the mentors fail to show up for meetings when they say they will (Johnson, 1998; Network Training and Research Group, 1996; Morrow and Styles, 1995; Mecartney et al., 1994; Styles and Morrow, 1992).
- They attempt to instill a set of values that may be different from or inconsistent with those the youth is exposed to at home (Network Training and Research Group, 1996; Morrow and Styles, 1995).
- They attempt to transform or reform the youth by setting tasks and adopting a parental or authoritative role. The value of a mentor is often in having a supportive adult who is not a parent or teacher; adopting the posture of these authority figures undermines the development of trust between a mentor and youth (Network Training and Research Group, 1996; Morrow and Styles, 1995; McPartland and Nettles, 1991).
- They emphasize behavior changes over developing mutual trust and respect in the relationship. Mentors cannot force youth to change; too much focus on what is wrong with a youth is more likely to turn youth away from the mentor (Sipe, 1996).

Adopting these ineffective strategies most often leads to dissatisfaction with the match and premature termination. In a study of BBBS pairs, P/PV researchers found that over 70 percent of the matches that included volunteers who took this approach met only sporadically, and nearly 70 percent had ended between the initial research interview and a second interview nine months later. In contrast, for matches whose volunteers adopted the effective trust-building approach, more than 90 percent met on a regular and consistent basis, and only 9 percent had ended at the time of the second interview (Morrow and Styles, 1995).

The volunteers' approach to the match is clearly critical in determining the type of relationship that develops between the partners. Adults who become effective mentors most often see themselves as "friends" rather than teachers or parents and define their role as supporting the youth in a variety of ways. In contrast, less effective mentors approach the relationship with narrow, specific goals aimed at changing the youth's behavior. As some program operators put it, a mentor must be caring, steady, patient, realistic, resourceful, respectful and resilient (The Johns Hopkins Hospital, n.d.). The key question for mentoring programs then is how to ensure that volunteers approach a match with an eye toward building trust and establishing a friendship.

"He's my best friend."

EFFECTIVE PROGRAM PRACTICES

One of the strongest conclusions that can be drawn from the research on mentoring is the importance of providing mentors with support in their efforts to build trust and develop a positive relationship with youth. Volunteers and youth cannot be simply matched and left to their own devices; programs need to provide an infrastructure that fosters the development of effective relationships (Sipe, 1996).

Across the mentoring programs that have been evaluated, the extent to which they include standardized procedures in such areas as screening, orientation, training, matching practices, match supervision and support, and regular meeting times varies tremendously. Some programs include virtually none of these elements of program procedure while others are highly structured. The research suggests that three areas are especially important in fostering the development of successful relationships: screening, orientation and training, and support and supervision.[2]

SCREENING

The screening process provides programs with an opportunity to select those adults who are most likely to be successful as mentors by looking for individuals who already understand that a mentor's primary role is to develop a friendship with the youth.

The process of developing a long-term, high-quality relationship begins with the selection of mentors from among the adults who present themselves as potential volunteers. Volunteer screening determines the adult's suitability for this difficult and time-consuming task, ensures the safety of the youth and protects the reputation of the program (Roaf et al., 1994). Specific procedures that many mentoring programs use include interviewing the potential mentor, reviewing personal references and checking police records.

Program staff should review volunteers' commitments and discuss how they intend to fit their mentoring responsibilities into their overall schedules. "Mentoring not only requires commitment to a young person, it requires having consistent free time and the financial resources to support an active relationship" (Network Training and Research Group, 1996:17). If the pair does not meet regularly, the potential for the adult to influence the youth can never be realized. And inconsistency may damage a youth's ability to trust. Individuals whose other commitments or lack of resources indicate they will have difficulty meeting with a youth on a consistent basis should be screened out.[3]

The screening process can also be useful in determining a potential mentor's approach to the match—that is, whether the individuals understand the importance of being a friend or whether they are interested in "transforming" youth. The latter should probably be screened out of mentoring programs and steered toward programs with less emphasis on one-to-one relationships (e.g., tutoring programs).[4]

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Having selected the best volunteers, programs need to ensure that these adults are prepared for their new roles as mentors. Orientation and pre-match training provide important opportunities to ensure that youth and mentors share a common understanding of their respective roles and to help mentors develop realistic expectations of what they can accomplish. The amount and focus of training provided varies widely across programs. Some programs offer minimal orientation to program procedures and requirements. At the other extreme are programs that require several hours of training on such items as program rules, youth's backgrounds, theories of adolescent development, active listening skills and problems mentors typically encounter.

Although research has not been able to identify the optimal amount and content of training, there is general consensus that some training is critical. And the issues that frequently develop in mentoring relationships suggest several appropriate topics. Training can equip volunteers with the information and strategies they need to maximize their chances of developing mutually satisfying relationships with youth. Toward this end, training should focus on the practices of effective mentors. Mentors with unrealistic expectations about what they can accomplish will inevitably become frustrated and disappointed when these expectations are not met. By encouraging mentors to approach the match with the goal of simply developing a good relationship, program staff can help foster realistic expectations among mentors (Sipe, 1996; Network Training and Research Group, 1996).

Training can also help mentors understand their youth and bridge their differences. Programs often recruit mentors who come from backgrounds quite different from those of the youth with whom they work. Training can create an awareness of these differences and better prepare mentors to work effectively (Ensher and Murphy, 1997). Mentors themselves often indicate the need for more information about the

youth with whom they will be working (Network Training and Research Group, 1996; Styles and Morrow, 1992; Tierney and Branch, 1992).

Finally, for programs in which mentors take on dual roles—for example, when a youth's work supervisor is also his or her mentor—training can prepare the adult to shift between these two roles. Similarly, in programs located within a large institution (e.g., juvenile detention centers, hospitals, schools), mentors need an orientation to that institution and its rules and procedures (Mecartney et al., 1994; The Johns Hopkins Hospital, n.d.).

SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

Ongoing supervision and support of matches by staff is critical for ensuring that pairs meet regularly over a substantial period and develop positive relationships. Programs in which professional staff provide regular support to volunteers are more likely to have matches that meet regularly and participants who are satisfied with their relationships. Programs in which mentors are not contacted regularly by staff report the most failed matches—those that do not meet consistently and, thus, never develop into relationships. This is true across various types of programs: school-based programs (Johnson, 1998; VanPatten, 1997; LoSciuto et al., 1996); institution-based programs (Mecartney et al., 1994); and friendship-based programs (Sipe, 1996).

In addition, mentors (and consequently youth) benefit tremendously from the support they receive from program staff. Most mentors experience considerable frustration, especially in the early stages of the relationship. While training can prepare mentors for some of the possible challenges ahead, ongoing support, either from professional staff or through mentor support groups, provides the moral support that mentors need to keep meeting with the youth and getting through the rough spots. This allows the match to develop rather than to dissolve prematurely (Sipe, 1996; Furano et al., 1993; The Johns Hopkins Hospital, n.d.). Such support seems to be especially critical for mentors whose youth have greater personal, social and financial problems (Network Training and Research Group, 1996).

Mentor support groups are helpful because volunteers can discuss their frustrations and problems with others who have faced similar challenges. The research suggests, however, that programs should not rely exclusively on this means of support since there is a danger of reinforcing unproductive strategies for coping with difficulties in the relationship. Professional staff can be instrumental in helping volunteers forge appropriate roles in their matches, fostering the development of positive and lasting relationships (Sipe, 1996). Some experienced and professional oversight is helpful and usually needed.

OTHER STRATEGIES

Although the elements discussed above appear to be the most critical for maximizing the number of successful relationships, some programs have used additional strategies that may contribute to developing good relationships. Several programs have found that establishing regular meeting schedules encourages pairs to meet consistently over time (Network Training and Research Group, 1996; Tierney and Branch, 1992). For mentors with busy schedules, having a specific time and place to meet helps build this activity into their overall commitments. An evaluation of Bay Area mentoring programs found that mentors without sufficient funds to participate in common activities—for example, going to movies, bowling, renting videos, going out for breakfast or dinner and attending baseball games—were more likely to be inconsistent in meeting with youth (Network Training and Research Group, 1996). Thus, some programs provide mentors with a small stipend (Styles and Morrow, 1992) to offset expenses. And programs may want to publish a monthly calendar of low-cost events and/or solicit and distribute free tickets to sporting, cultural and other events (Network Training and Research Group, 1996) as a way to reduce the cost of mentoring for the adult volunteers.

"The kid's don't seem to care about the mentor's race, or age. What they want is attention and love."

MATCHING ISSUES

Although programs vary tremendously in the way they match youth with mentors, research has not been able to isolate the best strategy for pairing. Some programs attempt to replicate natural mentoring by facilitating group activities and allowing participants to match themselves. Other programs go to great lengths to create matches in which youth and mentors share as many characteristics as possible, both in demographic characteristics and in attitudes and interests. But the failure rate of matches remains high in many programs. And research has consistently shown that the mentor's behavior is far more important to the success of the relationship than the manner in which the match is made (Johnson, 1998; Sipe, 1996).

None of the characteristics of mentors—age, race, gender—that staff tend to take into account when making a match correlates very strongly with frequency of meeting, length of match (Roaf et al., 1994), the youth's satisfaction with the mentor (Ensher and Murphy, 1997), or with mentee outcomes (Johnson, 1998). However, matches that take into account both the youth's and the mentor's preferences (in terms of demographic characteristics, attitudes and activities they want to participate in) are more likely to result in relationships that are satisfying to both members of the pair. Youth who perceive high levels of similarity with their mentor report greater liking and satisfaction with the match (Ensher and Murphy, 1997).

Most youth being served in mentoring programs are members of minority groups. Proponents of same-race matches stress the importance of providing a positive role model who is also minority, someone who may be pivotal in the development of these youth. At the same time, most adults who volunteer to be mentors are white. Thus, the efficacy of same-race compared with cross-race matches has been hotly debated in the mentoring field.

Several studies shed light on the relative effectiveness of same-race and cross-race matches. P/PV's examination of the frequency of meetings and longevity of relationships for both same-race and cross-race matches found no significant differences between these two types of matches (Furano et al., 1993). And in-depth interviews with both youth and mentors in several programs suggest that cross-race matches are nearly as likely as same-race matches to form positive relationships (Morrow and Styles, 1995; Styles and Morrow, 1992). Ensher and Murphy (1997) found that youth in same-race relationships reported receiving more instrumental support but not more psychosocial support than did youth assigned to different race mentors, and race did not affect youth's satisfaction with their mentors. Ensher and Murphy's research stressed the importance of *perceived* similarity: "If protégées find themselves to be similar to their mentors on some dimension other than race, they may be just as satisfied with mentors of a different race as with mentors of the same race" (1997:476).[5] Finally, analyses of BBBS matches uncovered no differences in outcomes for youth involved in same-race versus cross-race relationships (Tierney and Grossman, 1995). Although none of this research provides definitive evidence in and of itself, taken together, the data suggest that cross-race matches are viable alternatives to same-race matches.

Programs may prefer to make same-race matches, however, on a philosophical basis; and parents as well as youth often prefer a mentor of the same race. Given that respecting participants' wishes is important to building a relationship, programs should continue to honor these preferences and make same-race matches whenever possible. At the same time, it is clear that youth who wait years for a same-race mentor who never appears cannot derive the benefits that a mentor of any race can provide. Mentors involved in cross-race matches may need more preparation and ongoing support, but these matches can be satisfying and rewarding (Sipe, 1996).

MENTOR RECRUITMENT

How does a program find enough adults with flexible time and the emotional and financial resources to take on the demands of mentoring at-risk youth? Across programs, the youth desiring mentors nearly always outnumber the adults who volunteer their services; locating sufficient numbers of adults represents a major challenge for most programs (Sipe, 1996; Network Training and Research Group, 1996; McPartland and Nettles, 1991).

The most effective recruitment strategy seems to be word-of-mouth.

The most effective strategy for recruitment seems to be word of mouth. Many programs successfully use existing mentors to recruit their friends, family, coworkers and acquaintances. Because of their personal contact with someone who is already mentoring, these volunteers usually understand that commitment and persistence are required to be a successful mentor. While a number of programs have used mass media advertising as a recruitment strategy, media campaigns, especially television advertising, typically attract far more youth who want a mentor than adults who can realistically make a mentoring commitment.

Still, for programs to attract a diverse group of volunteers, it is important to use a variety of recruitment strategies. Church-sponsored programs are often successful in recruiting members of their congregations as mentors (McPartland and Nettles, 1991). Other programs have successfully used such institutions as the NAACP and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (Mecartney et al., 1994) to recruit volunteers. This strategy gives a program access to populations from which they might not otherwise be able to recruit. Still other programs connect with local businesses and recruit their employees to be mentors.

Colleges are often considered a fertile source of volunteers. Research shows, however, that the demands of their academic schedules often make it difficult for college students to keep up with the demands of a mentoring relationship (Tierney and Branch, 1992). Programs need to employ stringent screening procedures and conduct rigorous monitoring to ensure that students are willing and able to persist in the relationship.

With the renewed call for large numbers of mentors, the questions of how many adults will come forward and whether the resources and practices necessary to have effective mentoring will be in place remain unanswered. At least one researcher has concluded that the pool of capable mentors willing to spend substantial time is small and, thus, the number of youth in need who can be affected by mentoring is also small (Johnson, 1998). The question of how large the pool of willing and able mentors actually is remains a critical issue that needs to be addressed more systematically.

QUESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Mentoring research over the past 15 years has generated important findings. First, the field now has definitive evidence of the positive benefits mentoring can produce for the youth being served by these programs. We have also learned that unrelated youth and adults can come together to form meaningful and satisfactory relationships, but not without time and the right attitude. Not only does effective mentoring require effort on the part of the volunteers, but programs, too, must provide the time and resources to screen, train and support mentors adequately. And while our knowledge and understanding of programmatically created mentoring relationships have increased, several critical issues remain to be addressed.[6]

As a strategy for youth programming, mentoring is only as good as the relationships that develop. Many programs do not have a sufficient infrastructure to ensure a quality mentoring experience. Programs need standards or benchmarks to guide the development and monitoring of quality programs and successful relationships. As researchers have begun to identify best practices and the characteristics of effective mentoring, practitioners are learning how to assess their programs in these terms.

But agreed-on standards that can be used for such assessments do not yet exist. To the extent that the field can develop a set of benchmarks, programs and their funders will be able to infer the likely effects of their mentoring programs. Grossman and Johnson (Chapter 2) have taken the first steps toward providing the field with standards that can be applied across program types.

Various estimates exist of the number of youth who could benefit from a mentoring relationship. Regardless of whether that number is 5 million or 15 million, program operators and researchers alike agree that many more youth than are currently being served could benefit from having a mentor. But the research to date has not been able to determine how many adults are willing and able to serve as mentors. At the same time, numerous communities have undertaken efforts to develop wide-scale programs, but none has yet been successful in reaching their goals.

Two research projects were recently undertaken to address issues of scale. First, The Commonwealth Fund commissioned a survey, the results of which are reported in this volume, to shed some light on the question of how many adults are currently mentoring youth, whether informally or as part of formal programs, and how many others would be willing to become mentors. And P/PV is currently engaged in a study of several large-scale mentoring efforts. This research is examining the question of how to put such massive efforts into operation. Will these efforts be successful in identifying and recruiting thousands of new volunteers? And what levels of staffing and resources are needed to recruit, train and support a large cadre of volunteers?

The resource question itself remains a critical issue for the field. If current programs and new undertakings are successful in their efforts to recruit large numbers of new volunteers to meet the needs of youth, are there sufficient resources to train and support them? Current estimates of the cost of providing the infrastructure deemed essential for quality mentoring are imprecise. P/PV's research found that the average cost of maintaining a BBBS match for one year is about $1,000 (Tierney and Grossman, 1995). The cost per student to operate the Sponsor-A-Scholar program was about $1,500 in 1996 (Johnson, 1998). And most of the Hospital Youth Mentoring Programs spend between $2,500 and $3,000 per student per year, although some spend as little as $1,000 per student and one spends about $10,000 per student (Harwood et al., 1998).

These are all rough estimates of cost per youth derived by dividing total program budgets by the number of youth served. More precise estimates of costs are needed so that program operators and funders can better understand how many matches can be effectively supported within available resources and how that may differ across different types of programs. The Lewin Group, with assistance from P/PV, recently surveyed a sample of mentoring programs about their program costs to begin to address the need for more precise estimates of costs and to better understand the main program components contributing to these costs. The results of that research are presented by Fountain and Arbreton (Chapter 3).

Most of the research in this field has focused on one-on-one friendship-oriented or school-based academic-oriented mentoring models.

Little research has been conducted on programs in other settings, with other goals and relationship structures. However, the drug prevention program, Across Ages, that was reviewed for this paper provides evidence of mentoring's effectiveness in that context, and research on The Commonwealth Fund's Hospital Youth Mentoring Program (McClanahan, 1998) suggests that mentoring is also a viable vehicle for career exploration for older youth. The evaluation of TeamWorks reported on here is a rare example of an assessment of a group mentoring model. But more work is needed if we are to understand the full range of outcomes mentoring can affect as well as the limitations of this approach to serving disadvantaged adolescents.

Finally, in the wake of the positive effects that mentoring can have for youth, at a time when few youth programs have been able to report success, practitioners across the country are jumping on the mentoring bandwagon. But many of these programs are implementing mentoring models that have not been adequately researched. We do not yet know whether some of these alternative models—for example, matching adults with groups (of varying sizes) of youth rather than one-on-one, or short-term programs designed to impart specific skills—will result in the development of meaningful *mentoring* relationships characterized by the trust and support observed in long-term one-on-one programs. In addition to not knowing whether such relationships develop in these programs, we do not know whether they will produce benefits for youth similar to those we have observed in traditional mentoring programs. P/PV's current work for the U.S. Department of Education (in conjunction with The National Mentoring Partnership's Public Policy Council) is designed to explore the range of programs operating under the "mentoring" umbrella and to learn more about the types of relationships developing within them.

"In (schools), we're where the kids are, we know the teachers and counselors, we see the records. Schools cover every inch of this country. What a great base for a mentoring program!"

NOTES

1. The original sources have not been reviewed for this study. Thus, no information about the methods used in these evaluations is available.

2. While matching is also an important factor in the success of mentoring relationships, programs have not yet developed objective criteria that can reliably predict whether specific pairings will develop into successful relationships.

3. These individuals may be useful to programs in other ways. Staff may be able to develop alternative roles that volunteers with less available time or limited resources may be able to fill. Programs may also want to consider offering mentors small stipends to offset the costs mentors tend to incur (Styles and Morrow, 1992).

4. While we are suggesting that programs screen out individuals with these tendencies, it is possible that at least some may be redirected in their efforts with appropriate training and support. By identifying volunteers' tendencies initially, programs may be better able to focus training attention on individuals with greater need. However, evidence that volunteers not oriented toward building the relationship are less likely to seek advice from case managers and less likely to heed that advice when given lends support to simply screening these individuals out from the beginning. Flaxman et al. (1988:51) suggest that training be used as a further screening device, contending that training "is unlikely to turn someone who is unsuitable for mentoring into a good mentor, but it can be used as part of the selection process to weed out those who are unfit."

5. These researchers suggest that the development of a scale that assesses psychosocial and instrumental needs, which could be used in the matching process by determining similarities, would be a useful contribution to the field.

6. Most of these issues were identified in P/PV's synthesis of its mentoring research (Sipe, 1996), published two years ago. In the interim, new research has been undertaken to begin to address these issues; findings from several of these studies are presented in this volume.

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Assessing The Effectiveness Of Mentoring Programs

Jean Baldwin Grossman
Amy Johnson

In a world of limited resources, we increasingly seek programs that provide the most "bang for the buck." Even mentoring programs that rely on volunteer efforts and charitable financial support are being put to this test. Program operators and funders alike are looking for simple ways to determine and measure effectiveness, producing results on which key decisions about future efforts can be based.

Fortunately, a growing body of evidence substantiates mentoring programs' claims of effectiveness. Several recent evaluations (most of them reviewed in the second chapter of this volume) have documented that well-run programs matching a caring adult with a youth can significantly improve the youth's life—educationally, behaviorally and emotionally. But, studies have also shown that not all mentoring programs are effective (Sipe, 1996). Programs that lack sufficient infrastructure to screen and monitor volunteer efforts are unlikely to produce relationships that have much positive effects. In fact, a disappointing relationship can have an adverse effect, eroding a youth's self-esteem and trust in adults (Grossman and Rhodes, 1999).

Determining a program's effectiveness is crucial, but conducting a rigorous evaluation is costly. Previous evaluation experience demonstrates that credible outcome or impact research takes many years and is usually prohibitively expensive for any single program. So then, how can a program assess its effectiveness? How can a program determine whether it is having a positive impact without shifting resources toward a costly impact analysis in a way that jeopardizes operations?

"Nothing is a success just if you work hard. People have to see results before they'll give their time to mentoring."

We believe a viable approach to this dilemma is to use a set of programmatic quality benchmarks and indicators of in-program effects that have been empirically linked to longer-term effects. This chapter presents a number of benchmarks and indicators we have developed for two successful mentoring programs, Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) and Philadelphia Futures' Sponsor-A-Scholar (SAS), using data available from their two recent evaluations (Tierney and Grossman, 1995; and Johnson, 1998, respectively).

Our approach directly links a number of programmatic quality measures to significant improvements in youth performance and presents the levels of these quality measures found in the BBBS and SAS programs. Staff from mentoring programs can use these findings as benchmarks against which to gauge their own program's relative effectiveness. In other words, without conducting a rigorous evaluation, programs would be able to infer the likely direction and size of their own program's effects if they are delivering services of similar quality and/or see changes in participant performance comparable to the changes presented here. A comparison to the benchmarks could be used to demonstrate a program's strengths to funders, to evaluate practices and to identify operational issues in need of attention.

First, four points about the value and validity of using benchmarks from these two evaluations as a way to infer other programs' effectiveness should be considered:

- Though they are both mentoring programs, BBBS and SAS differ fundamentally in objectives, operations, and the size and characteristics of populations served. Brief descriptions of each program are provided in the following section.
- The evaluations of each program were rigorous in design and compared respective program impacts on participant behaviors to behaviors of a matched comparison or control group. Though the outcome measurements differ (largely because of differences in program objectives), the variables hypothesized to affect these differing outcomes were remarkably similar.
- Despite operational differences, the findings that emerged from these two evaluations are remarkably consistent. It is this consistency that suggests an opportunity for other mentoring programs to use these findings as benchmarks against which to measure their own effectiveness.
- Both BBBS and SAS are well-run, carefully monitored programs with clear objectives. Each of these characteristics contributes substantially to their respective successes. Without adequate infrastructure, there is no ground for assuming that any other program will be equally effective. Program operators and potential funders must look closely at issues of infrastructure, including mentor selection and training, expectations for individual relationships, and the operational support provided to both the mentors and youth who participate.

This chapter explores three types of benchmarks that other mentoring programs could use to gauge their own effectiveness: indicators relating to target population, quality measures of individual mentor-youth relationships and changes in outcomes. Though other programs will undoubtedly differ in important ways from the BBBS and SAS programs, we feel that the collective and consistent evidence presented here provides critical information on key variables. In the next section, we provide brief descriptions of BBBS and SAS and the groups of youth studied in each evaluation. The subsequent section explores the usefulness of the benchmarks by examining how these indicators relate to program impacts, followed by a section that suggests how to determine program effectiveness by using either changes in outcomes or the quality measures presented in the previous section. We also discuss how programs could conduct their own self-assessments.

Measurements of program quality can be linked to significant improvements in youth performance.

THE PROGRAMS

The following program descriptions are based on the evaluations referred to in the previous section. For more detailed program descriptions and evaluation findings, see Tierney and Grossman (1995) for a discussion of BBBS and Johnson (1998) for a discussion of SAS.

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

For more than 90 years, BBBS has paired unrelated adult volunteers with youth from single-parent households in an approach that is intensive in delivery and broad in scope. The time commitment made by both the volunteer and the youth is substantial. They agree to meet two to four times per month for at least one year, with a typical meeting lasting three to four hours. BBBS is not a program designed to ameliorate specific problems or reach specific goals, such as college attendance, but rather to provide a youth with an adult friend who promotes general youth development objectives. The friendship forged with a youth by the Big Brother or Sister creates the framework through which the mentor can support and aid the youth.

Each BBBS program has a professional staff of caseworkers who screen and train mentors and supervise each mentoring relationship. These efforts are directed by a set of national operating standards designed to create effective matches. National requirements specify that case managers must contact the parent, youth and adult volunteer within two weeks of the match. Monthly telephone contact with the adult volunteer is required during the first year of the match, as is monthly contact with the parent or youth. The youth must be contacted directly at least four times during the first year. Once the first year of the match has concluded, the requirement for staff contact with the participants is reduced to once per quarter. Program staff also support the match by providing guidance when problems arise in the relationship.

Public/Private Ventures evaluated the effect of BBBS on all eligible youth between the ages of 10 and 16 who enrolled in the program at eight study sites between October 1991 and February 1993. Almost all sample members had only one active parent in their lives (this is a BBBS eligibility requirement), most were between the ages of 10 and 14, over half were boys (62.4%) and approximately half were members of a minority group (57.5%). Seventy-one percent of the minority youth were African American, 18 percent were Hispanic, and the rest were members of various other racial or ethnic groups. Over 40 percent of the youth lived in households that were receiving food stamps or cash public assistance, or both.

During the study's intake period, half the 1,138 applicants to the agencies were randomly selected to be put at the top of the waiting list. Case managers attempted to match these youth with a Big Brother or Big Sister as soon as possible. The other youth were put on the waiting list for 18 months. The impact of BBBS was determined by comparing the outcomes for these two groups 18 months later. At that time, on average, the participants had been matched for almost 12 months.

Little Brothers and Little Sisters met with their Big Brothers and Big Sisters on a regular basis. Over 70 percent of the pairs met at least three times a month, and approximately 45 percent met one or more times per week. An average meeting lasted 3.6 hours.

How local program staff can determine for themselves and document for others that they are effective.

For the purposes of this chapter, five different outcome measures were evaluated 18 months after program enrollment: perceived scholastic competence, days of school skipped in the previous 12 months, grades, the initiation of illegal drug use, and the initiation of alcohol use.

SPONSOR-A-SCHOLAR

The primary goal of SAS is to help students from Philadelphia public high schools "make it" to college. As a variant of the I Have A Dream program, this goal is sought through a range of support services, chief among which are the provision of long-term mentoring and financial help with college-related expenses. In addition, the program provides substantial academic support and help with the college application and financial aid processes.

SAS provides students with adult mentors for five years: from ninth grade through the first year after high school, which is to be the first year of college. Participating students must attend one of the city's public schools and be middle-achieving students, neither at the top of their class nor at or near the bottom, earning primarily Bs and Cs. Students must also be financially disadvantaged, as measured by their family's qualification for the federal free and reduced-price lunch program.

Mentors commit to working toward a set of ambitious objectives; the ultimate benchmark of success of the mentor-student relationship is the student's entrance into and attendance in college. Toward this goal, mentors are expected to see their students at least monthly, with telephone contact in between. They are expected to monitor their student's academic progress by reviewing the report card each marking period, to help with the financial aid and college application processes, to be in contact with program staff on a regular basis to discuss the evolving relationship with and progress of the student, and to participate in program activities and events.

The second important feature of SAS is the $6,000 in financial assistance for college-related expenses, designed to allay students' and their families' concerns about the cost of college attendance and persistence. This financial support is disbursed to the student in payments throughout his or her college career and is used to fill the gap that may exist after a standard financial aid package is assembled. Money is to be used for travel, books, living expenses, clothing and any other expenses that, when covered, facilitate college attendance. This financial contribution may be provided by the mentor or by someone else—an individual, company or organization that donates funds but does not choose to do actual mentoring. To receive the financial award, students must attend a two- or four-year accredited postsecondary institution, maintain their student status, keep in contact with Philadelphia Futures, and each semester provide program staff with a copy of their financial aid information as well as course schedule and academic transcript.

For each group of about 30 students in the SAS program, one member of the Philadelphia Futures' staff works part-time as the class coordinator. This position has numerous responsibilities, chief among which is to maintain regular monthly contact with both the mentor and the student in order to monitor the progress of the relationship. The coordinator also makes certain that mentors and students are meeting regularly, assesses the quality of their communication, makes clear the intentions or perspectives of one party to another, suggests alternative approaches to

breaking down barriers, and makes certain that the program goals of doing well in school and attending college are being pursued.

The evaluation of the SAS program began in 1993. All SAS students who were then high school seniors, juniors, sophomores and incoming freshmen became part of the study. A comparison group for the 180 SAS sample members was selected by matching non-SAS students in Philadelphia high schools with program participants on the basis of race, gender, school attended and ninth-grade academic performance. Data were collected from both groups at four points from Spring 1994 through Spring 1997.

The final study sample of 434 students was more or less evenly divided between males and females. More than three-fourths of the students were black; a little under half had parents with some education beyond high school; a little over half came from families with a working mother; a little over half were from single-parent homes; and the average number of siblings was between two and three. Virtually the entire sample felt they had the ability to complete college. The average rate of absenteeism in ninth grade was about 8 percent, or slightly less than 15 days, and the ninth-grade GPA was about 80 on a scale of 100.

Six different outcome measures for SAS were evaluated at various points after program enrollment: grade point averages in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades, college attendance in the first and second years after high school graduation, and the rate of persistence in college between the first and second years.

BENCHMARKS FROM THE BBBS AND SAS EVALUATIONS

The BBBS and SAS differ in many respects, including the age of the youth served, the services provided, and how frequently the mentor and youth should meet. What BBBS and SAS share with all mentoring programs, however, is that they foster relationships between a youth and an adult. Therefore, we investigated two important features of mentoring relationships: the characteristics of the participating youth and the characteristics of the relationship's quality. Characteristics of the participating youth we examined include academic performance before program enrollment, extent of academic motivation before program enrollment (as measured by rates of absenteeism from school) and level of family support. Characteristics of relationship quality we examined include its length, the frequency of contact between mentor and youth, and various measures that reveal a youth's and caseworker's sense of the relationship's quality.

We found that participant characteristics and the various quality measures of the relationships in the two programs were similarly related to effects. What is most noteworthy in our findings is the large number of effects from the two programs that are found for certain students or for students in certain types of relationships and the diminishing number of effects for other groups. This consistency of evidence strongly suggests that characteristics of participants and the quality measures of mentoring relationships are likely to be useful benchmarks for other mentoring programs. Because these features are empirically linked to positive participant outcomes in both evaluations, others interested in the relative effectiveness of their respective programs can use these as benchmarks against which to gauge the likely direction of the impact on their own participants' outcomes.

In this section, we summarize the connections found among various potential benchmarks and impacts.

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

A central and difficult question for program operators and others interested in program design is how to target program resources effectively. In other words, which students ought to be targeted to maximize program benefits? We present findings that show which youth benefitted most from participation in each program. Youth are distinguished according to several pre-program characteristics: grades, rates of school absenteeism and family support.

GRADES

To investigate whether mentoring has a differential impact on youth depending on their academic standing before enrollment, both the BBBS and SAS evaluations examined program effects by grouping youth into three distinct categories: low, moderate and high achievers. Low achievers in BBBS were those students who earned Cs or lower before entering the program; in SAS, these were students whose ninth-grade GPA was less than 75.7 (out of 100). Moderate achievers in BBBS were those students who earned Bs and Cs before entering the program; in SAS, these were students whose ninth-grade GPA was between 75.7 and 86.6. And high achievers in BBBS were those students who earned As and Bs before entering the program; in SAS, these were students whose ninth-grade GPA was greater than 86.6. In comparing mentored and non-mentored youth within each of the three categories, the significant impacts were as follows:

Among those with initially low achievement levels, mentored youth were:

- Less likely to skip school (BBBS),
- Less likely to start using drugs (BBBS),
- More likely to have a higher GPA in tenth grade (SAS),
- More likely to have a higher GPA in eleventh grade (SAS),
- More likely to be enrolled in college the first year after high school (SAS), and
- More likely to be enrolled in college the second year after high school (SAS).

Among those with initially moderate achievement levels, mentored youth were:

- More likely to feel a sense of competence in school (BBBS),
- Less likely to start using drugs (BBBS), and
- More likely to be enrolled in college the first year after high school (SAS).

Among those with initially high achievement levels, mentored youth experienced

- no significant impacts.

Both the characteristics of participants and the quality measures of mentoring relationships are likely to be useful benchmarks for mentoring programs.

ABSENTEEISM

We also examined the differential effects of participation on youth according to their level of absenteeism before program enrollment. Those with high rates of absenteeism are presumed to be the least motivated students, while those with the lowest rates are presumed to be the most motivated. In each case, youth were again divided into three groups: those with high, moderate and low rates of absenteeism. In BBBS, a high rate of absenteeism was defined as skipping more than one day of school in the year before entering the program; in SAS, a high rate of absenteeism in the ninth grade was defined as more than 9 percent. One skipped day of school constituted a moderate rate of absenteeism in BBBS; in SAS, a moderate rate of absenteeism in the ninth grade was defined as between 3 and 9 percent. In BBBS, those with low rates of absenteeism had not skipped any days before entering the program; in SAS, these were students whose ninth-grade rate of absenteeism was less than 3 percent.

In comparing the outcomes of mentored and non-mentored youth within each of the three categories, the significant impacts were as follows:

Among those with initially high absentee rates, mentored youth were:

- Less likely to skip school (BBBS),
- More likely to have a higher GPA in tenth grade (SAS),
- More likely to have a higher GPA in eleventh grade (SAS), and
- More likely to be enrolled in college the first year after high school (SAS).

Among those with initially moderate absentee rates, mentored youth were

- more likely to be enrolled in college
- the first year after high school (SAS).

Among those with initially low absentee rates, mentored youth were

- less likely to skip school (BBBS).

FAMILY SUPPORT

Only the SAS evaluation examined the differential effects of program participation on youth according to their level of family support. Youth were divided into three groups: those with minimal, moderate and high levels of family support, as measured by parent involvement in school-related activities; level of discussion at home on important topics; and encouragement of college attendance. In comparing mentored and non-mentored youth within each of the three categories, the significant impacts were as follows:

Among those with minimal family support, mentored youth were:

- More likely to have a higher GPA in tenth grade (SAS),
- More likely to be enrolled in college the first year after high school (SAS),
- More likely to be enrolled in college the second year after high school (SAS), and
- More likely to have a higher rate of persistence between the first and second years of college (SAS).

Among those with moderate family support, mentored youth were

- more likely to be enrolled in college
- the first year after high school (SAS).

Among those with high family support, mentored youth experienced

- no significant impacts.

In sum, the collective evidence from these two evaluations strongly suggests that which youth are selected or targeted for program participation is likely to play a critical role in whether a program has a significant effect on participant outcomes. Deciding which youth ought to participate in a program is difficult and is driven by the program's mission. But, the consistency of the findings from the two evaluations suggests that programs serving youth who have comparatively fewer resources (as measured by academic performance, motivation and family support) will show more widespread effects than will programs that serve youth who have comparatively more resources. The findings also suggest that if program participants are already sufficiently on their way toward a program's goals, or have existing resources at their disposal on which to draw for support in attaining similar goals, then mentoring programs are not maximizing their impact.

RELATIONSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

Common sense tells us that better relationships should have better effects on youth. But what measures of a relationship capture the essence of "better?" One can characterize relationships according to objective measures, such as how long they have lasted and how often the pair meets, or according to subjective measures, such as how comfortable the parties are in the relationship and how satisfying the relationship is. The data collected in the SAS and BBBS evaluations enable us to examine the link between both objective and subjective measures and mentoring effect.

We found that in both programs certain characteristics of the mentoring relationships were indeed linked with improved participant performance in a number of areas. Programs can use measures of these characteristics to gauge whether they are doing a good job in matching, coaching, supervising and training, and whether their participants are likely to achieve program goals. Benchmarks of effective relationships examined here include length of the relationship, frequency of contact between mentor and youth and quality of the relationship.

LENGTH OF THE RELATIONSHIP

The longer a relationship lasts, presumably the more likely a mentor will be to have a positive effect on a youth. Relationships of short duration probably do not give adequate time to develop the mutual trust and respect necessary for real growth to occur on the part of the youth. But how long do relationships have to be? Is there a minimum threshold?

For this analysis, we use only data from the BBBS study, because the SAS program requires mentors and youth to participate for a period of five years.[1] Youth were divided into four groups according to the length of time they were matched with an adult: more than twelve months, six to twelve months, three to six months, and less than three months.

In comparing mentored and non-mentored youth within each of the four categories, the significant effects were as follows:

Students in relationships more than twelve months:

- Felt more confident about doing their school work (BBBS),
- Skipped fewer school days (BBBS),
- Had higher grades (BBBS), and
- Were less likely to start using drugs or alcohol (BBBS).

Students in relationships lasting six to twelve months

- skipped fewer school days (BBBS).

Students in relationships lasting three to six months

- no significant impacts.

Students in relationships lasting less than three months:

- Felt less confident about doing their school work (BBBS),
- Had substantially lower sense of self-worth (BBBS), but
- Had slightly higher grades (BBBS).

FREQUENCY OF CONTACT

Just as the length of the relationship between mentor and youth is presumed to provide more opportunity for positive influence, so is more frequent contact. Simple correlations, however, do not show this. It appears, at least to some extent, that mentors who meet frequently with youth are experiencing the greatest struggles. In BBBS, where the meeting expectation is approximately once a week, students with once-a-week contact showed more positive outcomes than did students with more and less contact. Some of the behaviors of the more-than-once-a-week group deteriorated. Thus, frequency of meeting should probably not be used as a benchmark for mentoring programs with near once-a-week meeting requirements, such as BBBS. On the other hand, in SAS where the meeting requirement is once a month, frequency of meetings did correlate well with academic outcomes. In SAS, students who met with their mentors most frequently (at least once a week) did significantly better on the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade GPA and on first-year college attendance. Students who met with their mentors at a more moderate rate of frequency (more than once a month but not as often as every week) and those who met with their mentors least often (less than once a month) experienced much less consistent effects.

The extent of telephone contact between adult and youth appears a somewhat more useful indication of whether the relationship is leading toward positive outcomes for the youth. In the BBBS evaluation, frequency of telephone contact was again measured as less than once a week, once a week and more than once a week. And the SAS measurement was again less than once a month, more than once a month but less than once a week, and once a week. In comparing the outcomes of mentored and non-mentored youth within each of the three categories, the significant effects were as follows:

Students who spoke with their mentors on the telephone with the greatest frequency:

- Were more likely to feel a sense of school competency (BBBS),
- Were less likely to skip school (BBBS),
- Had higher grades (BBBS),
- Were less likely to start using drugs (BBBS),
- Had a higher GPA in tenth grade (SAS),
- Had a higher GPA in eleventh grade (SAS),
- Were more likely to be enrolled in college the first year after high school (SAS),
- Were more likely to be enrolled in college the second year after high school (SAS), and
- Had a higher rate of persistence between the first and second years of college (SAS).

Students who spoke with their mentors on the telephone with a moderate rate of frequency were:

- Less likely to skip school (BBBS),
- Less likely to start using drugs (BBBS),
- Less likely to start using alcohol (BBBS), and
- More likely to be enrolled in college the first year after high school (SAS),

Students who spoke with their mentors on the telephone with the least frequency:

- Were less likely to skip school (BBBS), and
- Had a higher GPA in tenth grade (SAS).

Programs serving youth with comparatively fewer resources will show more widespread impacts.

QUALITY OF THE RELATIONSHIP

Both evaluations included measures designed to reflect the quality of the mentoring relationship. Using youth's own sense of pleasure or satisfaction with their mentoring relationships is a useful means of understanding the quality of the match. The impacts for those in "good" relationships were positive and consistent across the two evaluations, showing the strength of these measures as a gauge for how likely a relationship is to produce intended outcomes.

The BBBS evaluation included four measures that reflect quality of relationship: the youth's sense of disappointment in the mentor and the relationship (for example, not asking about themselves, making fun of them or making them feel stupid); the youth's perception of whether the relationship was youth-centered (for example, activities are centered around what the youth wants to do); the youth's emotional engagement in the relationship (for example, whether the youth is happy, or feels special, ignored or bored); and the caseworker's assessment of whether the mentor took a negative approach, pushing the youth too hard and having difficulty setting limits with the youth's family. The SAS evaluation included one measure designed to reflect the youth's sense of the quality of the relationship, based on the youth's sense of how much respect, understanding, closeness and excitement there was in meeting.

Both evaluations again grouped students into three levels within each measure of a relationship's quality: a low, medium and high rating. In comparing mentored and non-mentored youth within each of the three categories, the significant effects were as follows:

Youth in relationships with the highest "positive" rating:[2]

- Were more likely to feel a sense of competence in school (BBBS),
- Were less likely to skip school (BBBS),
- Had higher grades (BBBS),
- Were less likely to start using drugs (BBBS),
- Were less likely to start using alcohol (BBBS),
- Had a higher GPA in tenth grade (SAS),
- Had a higher GPA in eleventh grade (SAS),
- Had a higher GPA in twelfth grade (SAS),
- Were more likely to be enrolled in college the first year after high school (SAS), and
- Were more likely to be enrolled in college the second year after high school (SAS).

Youth in relationships with a moderately "positive" rating:

- Were more likely to feel a sense of competency in school (BBBS),
- Were less likely to skip school (BBBS),
- Were less likely to start using drugs (BBBS), and
- Were more likely to be enrolled in college the first year after high school (SAS).

Youth in relationships with the least "positive" rating:

- were less likely to skip school (BBBS).

In summary, the collective evidence from the two data sets strongly suggests that the following relationship quality measures are useful indicators of a program's effectiveness:

- Length of relationship,
- Frequency of telephone contact,
- The youth's perception of closeness,
- The youth's sense of disappointment in the mentor,
- The youth's perception of whether the relationship was youth-centered,
- The youth's emotional engagement in the relationship, and
- The caseworker's assessment of whether the mentor took a negative approach.

Program staff can and should use similar measures, as discussed in the section below, to draw inferences about the likely significance of their own program's impacts.

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USING THE BENCHMARKS

We have shown that programs that serve three types of youth have larger impacts than do similar programs that serve more advantaged youth. The three types are:

- Less academically successful youth (as measured by average grades before coming to the program),
- Youth with more academic behavior problems (as measured by official days absent or youth's report of the days of school skipped), and
- Youth with less family support (as measured by a family support measure).

In addition, we have shown that programs also have larger impacts if they can demonstrate that:

- They create matches that last six months or longer,
- The mentor and youth talk frequently by phone,
- The relationships that form are viewed positively by the youth (as measured by an emotional engagement scale, a disappointment scale or an overall satisfaction scale), and
- The mentors take a constructive, open approach to the relationship (as measured by the youth's assessment of the youth-centeredness of the relationship or as judged by the program supervisors using our negative approach scale).

This is not to say that only programs that serve the most disadvantaged youth or that function at the highest level of quality—the longest matches, the best quality relationships—are the only ones that have positive effects. But programs that serve a more disadvantaged group of youth and are able to facilitate better relationships are likely to improve the behaviors and attitudes of their participants more than other similar mentoring programs that serve more advantaged youth and create shorter, less satisfying relationships.

For those interested in using these benchmarks to gauge the effectiveness of their own program, we include, in the appendix, the specific questions that comprises each of the bench-

TABLE 1
BENCHMARK LEVELS FOUND IN THE BBBS EVALUATION

Benchmarks	Ever-Matched	Still-Matched
Earned Bs or better (youth report)	**39%**	**41%**
Skipping No Days of School During Prior 12 Months (youth report)	**86%**	**90%**
Emotional Engagement Scale Average	**3.43**	**3.55**
High (Scale=4.00)	24%	28%
3.00 to 3.99	57%	60%
Less than 3.00	19%	12%
Disappointment Scale Average	**1.73**	**1.61**
2.50 or more	14%	8%
1.50 to 2.49	46%	44%
1.00 to 1.49	41%	48%
Youth-Centered Relationship Scale Average	**3.53**	**3.69**
4.00	40%	50%
3.00 to 3.99	47%	44%
1.00 to 2.99	12%	6%
Mentor's Negative Approach Scale Average (Case Worker Report)	**1.60**	**1.48**
1.01 to 2.00	33%	8%
1.00 to 2.00	34%	51%
1.00	33%	41%
Number of Times Per Month the Mentor Called Youth	**5.75**	**6.36**
Average Length of Match 18 Months After Enrollment (in month)	**11.3***	**12.8**
Less than 3 months	4%	2%
3 to 6 months	15%	8%
More than 6 months to 12 months	36%	29%
More than 12 months	46%	60%

* *Because many pairs were still meeting, 11.3 months underestimates the completed BBBS length of match.*

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TABLE 2
BENCHMARK LEVELS FOUND IN THE SAS EVALUATION

Benchmarks	
GPA in Ninth Grade	
More than 86.6	29%
75.7 to 86.6	47%
Less than 75.7	24%
Rate of Absenteeism in Ninth Grade*	
More than 9%	26%
3 to 9%	39%
Less than 3%	36%
Family Support Scale	
More than 22	26%
15 to 21.9	61%
Less than 15	13%
Number of Times Per Month the Mentor Called the Youth	
About once a week	27%
Less than once a week but more than once a month	54%
Less than once a month	19%
Relationship Quality Scale	
Less than 8	27%
8.1 to 10.9	41%
11 or more	32%

* *Includes both excused and unexcused days*

Programs serving a more disadvantaged group of youth AND are able to facilitate better relationships are likely to be producing more improvements among the youth.

mark measures along with instructions on how to construct each measure from the answers given by the youth or caseworker. Once the data are collected and benchmarks for the program are calculated, how should they be interpreted? Against what should the collected benchmark data be compared?

One good comparison is with measurements taken earlier. If over time the benchmark levels are improving—that is, matches are lasting longer and the relationships are more satisfying—perhaps in response to program improvements, then a program can infer that it is probably having more positive effects. Another comparison that could be made is to measurements taken in other similar, but proven mentoring programs (like BBBS or SAS) that serve similar youth. If the staff of a BBBS- or SAS-like program find that their benchmark distributions were at least as favorable as those of the BBBS or SAS, then it is reasonable to assume that the program is having similar positive effects.

Table 1 presents the distribution of benchmarks found in the BBBS and Table 2 presents that of the SAS program. To use these tables, a program operator must first determine that his or her program is reasonably similar to either BBBS (a non-targeted, friendship-oriented mentoring program) or SAS (an academically oriented mentoring program serving high school students). For example, if one operates a friendship-oriented mentoring program for young adolescents, then Table 1 would be the most useful. Although BBBS serves youth aged 6 to 16 from single-parent homes, the data used to develop the benchmarks (and presented in Table 1) were only for youth aged 10 to 16. If one operates an academically oriented mentoring program for high school students, then Table 2 should be used.

In addition, to properly use these tables, the program operator must collect information on the youth in a manner similar to that used for the BBBS or SAS evaluation. Information for the BBBS evaluation was collected 18 months after caseworkers began the matching process, from all youth who were ever matched with a mentor and for all youth who applied to the

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program during a particular period. At this 18-month juncture, some of the relationships had ended, while others still continued. The ever-matched column of Table 1 presents the benchmarks for all youth in the cohort who were ever matched. The still-matched column includes information on only the youth who were still in active matches at the time of the interview. If a program operator gathers information on only active matches, they should compare their benchmarks with those in the still-matched column; if they gather the information on a cohort of ever-matched youth (from program records or a survey), then they should compare their benchmarks with those in the ever-matched column.

The information for the SAS evaluation was collected from all the youth who entered the program in particular years. The SAS study administered its first survey approximately 18 to 24 months after the youth entered the program. Subsequent data were collected on all youth who were ever matched, including those who did not continue as program participants.

DETERMINING PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS BY USING CHANGES IN OUTCOMES

These benchmarks describe the connection between participant and relationship characteristics on the one hand, and program outcomes on the other. Although benchmarks are correlated with outcome impacts, they are not measures of actual changes in participant performance. Policymakers, funders, parents and program staff are ultimately interested in changes in performance. In this section, we examine how to gauge a mentoring program's effectiveness based directly on outcomes.

Perhaps the most direct way to assess a program's effect is by examining how participants change over time. Though this strategy is appealing, it is more complex than it may appear. To examine participant changes over time, one must use the following steps:

1. The first and most important step is to choose which outcomes to track. The outcomes chosen should be concrete, measurable and based on clearly articulated program goals. The outcomes should be related to participant behaviors that the program either explicitly tries to affect (such as college attendance) or that it would logically affect given the intervention and a youth's average program experience. Program goals can include such things as improved academic performance, improved parental and peer relationships and more exposure to the world of work.[1]
2. The second step is to interpret the findings. A positive or negative change in an outcome, such as grades or school attendance, is not the same thing as a positive or negative program impact. The impact of a program is its effect on participants beyond what would have happened to them without the program. The change observed in mentored youth must be compared with what their characteristics would have been without a mentor. And because one clearly cannot observe the outcomes for the participants themselves had they not received a mentor, the outcomes of another group of youth—nonprogram participants, called a comparison or control group—are compared to the participants. It is only this comparison to another group or to some known outcomes that indicates whether the improved outcomes are caused by an effective program or to the natural course of development.

A program can gauge its effectiveness by measuring the outcomes it generates.

Two programs undertaken in the mid- to late 1970s—National Supported Work and the Summer Training and Education Program (STEP)—provide excellent examples of how examination of outcomes can be misleading. The Supported Work program was offered to four groups of unemployed individuals: ex-offenders, out-of-school youth, former drug addicts and AFDC recipients. All the participants came to the program in need of employment and with limited prospects. During the follow-up period of two to three years, the employment rates of all the program participants increased significantly. However, so did the employment rates of similar nonpartici-

TABLE 3
CHANGES IN BBBS AND SAS OUTCOMES

Change over 18 months Outcomes for BBBS	Control Youth	Mentored Youth
Scholastic Competence	+ 24	+1 18
GPA (1-4 scale)	- 13	- 05
Days of School Skipped	+ 08	+ 03
Started to Use Drugs	11%	7%
Started to Use Alcohol	27%	21%

Change since Ninth Grade Outcomes for SAS	Comparison Youth	Mentored Youth
GPA in 10th Grade (1-100 scale)	-4 6	-1 7
GPA in 11th Grade (1-100 scale)	-5 3	-2 8
Percent Attending College the Year after Graduation	64%	85%
Percent Attending College Two Years after Graduation	57%	73%

pants, the control group members. In fact, except among the AFDC recipients, the employment rates of the control group members were higher than those of the program participants. Thus, when the key outcome variable was examined in isolation, it actually did not improve the employment prospects of the participants any more than no program involvement would have.

In the mid- to late 1980s, STEP began offering half-time work and half-time remediation to educationally and economically disadvantaged youth. The program goal was to increase the youth's academic competence. Over the summer, however, participants' test scores did not increase, but decreased slightly (Sipe, Milliner and Grossman, 1987). It appeared that the program was ineffective. But, over the same period, the test scores of a control group of youth plummeted nearly a whole grade level. Thus, STEP effectively stemmed the learning loss that typically occurred with these youth over the summer.

What do you do if you do not have a control group? Does this mean that measuring outcomes, without assessing effects by means of a control group, is without value? The answer is "no." General knowledge about how similar participants ordinarily do with respect to the desired outcomes can help form a reasoned judgment about a program's value. This technique does not provide knowledge as certain as that produced by an impact evaluation, but it is clearly useful and certainly better than no comparison at all.

Because the BBBS and SAS evaluations did track the outcomes of comparison groups, they provide extremely useful information about how key outcomes change naturally over time for various types of nonmentored youth. Table 3 presents the changes in observed outcomes for both nonmentored and mentored youth in order to highlight the magnitude of change that constitutes statistically significant impacts. All of the differences represent statistically significant program impacts for the mentored and nonmentored youth. A program with similar or larger participant changes (serving similar youth) can justifiably infer that its program is also having a positive and significant effect.

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

Most of the youth in the BBBS program evaluation were between the ages of 10 and 14 and from single-parent homes. Changes in behaviors among those in the study who were not mentored (the control group) show what changes in various outcomes over an 18-month period could be expected to occur naturally. Over this period, we found that for nonmentored youth:

- Scholastic competence scores (1 is low, 4 is high) increased by 0.24,
- Grades (GPA) decreased by 0.13,
- They skipped 0.8 more days of class per year,
- 11 percent started using drugs, and
- 27 percent started drinking alcohol.

Against this backdrop, we found that for the mentored youth (participants in the BBBS program):

- Scholastic competence scores (1 is low, 4 is high) increased by 1.18,
- Virtually no decrease in grades occurred,
- There was virtually no increase in skipping school,
- 7 percent started using drugs, and
- 21 percent started drinking alcohol.

From the BBBS impact study (Tierney and Grossman, 1995), we know that the program has a statistically significant impact on all of these outcomes. Thus, if a program serves a similar population of youth as those included in the BBBS study and the program finds changes in outcomes similar to or greater than those reported here, one could reasonably make the argument that the program led to improvements in those outcomes. For example, if a mentoring program that served primarily 10- to 14-year-old youth from similar types of families found that its youth's grades did not decrease over an 18-month period, the program could cite our observed 0.13 decline in GPA for the BBBS control group and claim that their program prevented this expected decline.

SPONSOR-A-SCHOLAR

Consider the changes observed among the older SAS sample. Youth in the SAS evaluation were students in Philadelphia's public high schools when they joined the program or became part of the comparison group. We found that among the youth who were not enrolled in SAS:

- Grade point averages (measured from 0 to 100) had decreased by 4.56 points from the beginning of ninth grade to the end of tenth,
- By the end of eleventh grade, grades were 5.27 points lower than they were in ninth grade,
- 64 percent of the comparison group members attended college the year after graduation, and
- 57 percent of the entire group was attending college two years after graduation (including both new enrollees and returning students).

The behavior of the comparison group over this period can be used by program operators who serve youth similar to those served by SAS to gauge how these academic outcomes change naturally over a five-year period.

By contrast, we found that among the mentored SAS participants:

- Grade point averages (measured from 0 to 100) had decreased only by 1.72 points from the beginning of ninth grade to the end of tenth,
- By the end of eleventh grade, grades were only 2.77 points lower than they were in ninth grade,
- 85 percent of the mentored youth attended college the year after graduation, and
- 73 percent of the entire group was attending college two years after graduation (including both new enrollees and returning students).

As with the BBBS sample, we find that grades for these youth tend to decrease over time without any extra intervention. The mentoring and services provided by SAS mitigated much of the decline and greatly increased the percentage of youth who attended college in both the

first and second years after high school. If a program similar to SAS finds that its participants' grades remain fairly stable through high school and a similar percentage attends college, then it is likely that it is also having a significant effect on its youth's academic achievements.

SUMMARY

We began this paper by asking a question: How can a program determine for itself, and demonstrate for others, that it produces positive impacts and does so as efficiently as possible? There are three basic steps to conducting such an assessment. First, by examining the content and structure of the program one must decide what outcomes the program is most likely to affect and which of these outcomes the program wishes to track. Second, one must gather appropriate information about these outcomes. Third, one must know how to interpret that information.

Thus, before a mentoring program uses any of the measures discussed in this chapter, staff should decide whether they believe their program is likely to have a positive effect on any of the outcomes for which we developed a benchmark: academic behavior and achievement, and drug and alcohol use. If a program believes it affects these outcomes, then the information presented here can be of use in both the data collection and the interpretation stages. If a program wishes to track other outcomes, it will need to identify appropriate measures of those outcomes and determine how to interpret changes in those measures.

In order to use any aspect of the assessment scheme offered in this chapter, programs will need to collect the needed data. The appendix lists the questions that make up each benchmark as well as the scale constructions. Youth's preprogram characteristics can be collected from an intake form or from school records. Assessments of outcomes or the quality of the relationship should be taken long enough after the youth and his or her mentor have been meeting to expect that some change in the youth has occurred.

In the sections above, we presented and discussed several measures that mentoring programs can use to assess their own effectiveness. We explored three types of indicators that programs could use: descriptions of participant characteristics, measures of effective relationships and changes in participant outcomes. Directly measuring change in specific outcome measures is what many think of as the only way to demonstrate program effectiveness. However, as we discussed, outcomes often change over time as a result of maturation, not because of the program. Thus, they are not as straightforward a tool as they appear. In order to interpret outcome changes correctly, operators need to have examples of typical changes against which they can compare the changes they measure.

Therefore, this paper provides program operators with other techniques to evaluate their programs. In particular, it provides mentoring programs with programmatic quality benchmarks, which are often easier to measure, yet which are empirically linked to effects on academic behavior and performance and initiation of drug and alcohol use. We have linked various effects to their relationship characteristics and to the types of participants served. A program that serves participants who were more susceptible to mentoring or supports better quality relationships, or both, will lead to more improvements among its participants than will those who serve groups less affected by their mentoring experience, because either they are less susceptible to mentoring or the relationships are not as productive.

APPENDIX

FAMILY SUPPORT BENCHMARK

This benchmark measures the extent of family support provided to the youth who participate in the program. It provides a measure for assessing the extent to which an appropriate population has been targeted for program services. It is constructed using survey data.

SCALE ITEMS

1. Within the last year, how often have you discussed the following with someone at home?
   Selecting a course or programs at school
   School activities or events
   Things you have studied in class
   Grades
   Attendance
   Summer programs or summer jobs
   Planning for college
   Ratings: Three or more times = 2, Once or twice = 1, Not at all = 0.

2. Within the last year, has your parent(s) or guardian(s) done any of the following?
   Attended a school meeting
   Phoned or spoken to your teacher or counselor
   Visited your classes
   Attended a school event where you participated (for example, a play or sports event)
   Ratings: Yes = 1, No or don't know = 0

3. How often does your parent(s) or guardian(s) do the following?
   Ask about your homework and give you help if needed
   Limit the amount of time you can watch television
   Limit the amount of time for going out with friends on school nights
   Ratings: Four or more times a week = 3, One to three times a week = 2, Less than once a week or never = 1.

4. Who do you talk to about things that are important to you? (Mark all that apply.)
   Mother or female guardian
   Father or male guardian

   Has anyone in particular encouraged you to think about or attend college? If so, who?
   Mother or female guardian
   Father or male guardian
   Ratings: Each option selected = 1, If option is not selected = 0.

SCALE CONSTRUCTION

The ratings of the four items above are summed, for a total value ranging from 3 to 31. A "high" level of support is a value greater than 22; a "moderate" level of support is a value from 15 through 22; and a "low" level of family support is a value less than 15.

Benchmark Categories	SAS levels*
> 22	26%
15 through 22	61%
< 15	13%
Average rating: 18.16	

* *Includes information on youth no longer meeting with their mentor.*

In this chapter, we have presented findings showing that a mentoring program had a greater impact for youth who came from families providing comparatively less support. Thus, programs that target these youth are more likely to make a significant difference—boosting the outcomes for these youth significantly more than do programs serving youth from families providing comparatively strong support. If a program operator measures the strength of family background and finds they are targeting a population with at least as many youth who score at a "low" level of family support, then it is reasonable to assume that the program is having a positive effect on academic behavior and performance, as was found in the SAS study (Johnson, 1998).

LENGTH OF THE RELATIONSHIP BENCHMARK

This benchmark measures how many relationships end before 12 months and how long the youth and mentor had been meeting by month 18 (after the matching process began). The data is collected through program records.

Benchmark Categories	BBBS levels
Failed in less than 3 months	6%
Failed between months 3 to 6	13%
Failed between months 6 to 12	36%
Lasted more than 12 months	46%
Average: 11.6 months	

The average length of relationship, 18 months after the matching process began, was 11.6 months. Because many of the matches were still meeting at this 18-month point, this is an underestimate of the average length of a completed match.

In this chapter, we have demonstrated that youth who are matched longer are more likely to show improvement in their behaviors and attitudes than are youth whose matches are shorter. Thus, mentoring programs that can create longer-lasting relationships are more likely to be effective than are similar mentoring programs whose relationships are shorter. If a program operator measures the length of the relationships and finds that their matches last at least as long as those in the BBBS sample, then it is reasonable to assume that the program is having a positive effect on academic behavior and performance and on drug and alcohol initiation, as was found in the BBBS study (Tierney and Grossman, 1995).

FREQUENCY OF TELEPHONE CONTACT BENCHMARK (BBBS)

This benchmark measures the typical frequency of telephone contact between the mentor and the youth, as reported by the youth. It is the measure of the closeness of the relationship, not a measurement of program requirements.

Benchmark Categories	BBBS Levels	
	Ever-Matched	Still-Matched
Less than once a month	11%	6%
Once a month but less than once a week	7%	4%
Once a week	35%	35%
More than once a week	47%	55%
Average	*5.75*	*6.36*

In this chapter, we have demonstrated that youth who speak more frequently with their mentors are more likely to show improvement in their behaviors and attitudes than are youth who speak with their mentors less frequently. Thus, mentoring programs that can create the types of relationships in which the partners speak to each other more frequently are more likely to be effective than are other mentoring programs whose matches speak less frequently. We do not know what the effect is of requiring telephone contact.

If a program operator measures the frequency of telephone contact and finds that their youth speak to their mentors at least as often as those in the BBBS sample (and they have similar program requirements), then it is reasonable to assume that the program is having a positive effect (Tierney and Grossman, 1995).

FREQUENCY OF TELEPHONE CONTACT (SAS)

This benchmark measures how often the mentor contacts the student by telephone. It is constructed using survey data.

SCALE ITEM

How often does your mentor contact you?

At least once a week
At least once a month, but not as often as every week
Less than once a month

Ratings: At least once a week = 3, At least once a month, but not as often as every week = 2, Less than once a month = 1.

Benchmark Categories	SAS levels
At least once a week	27%
At least once a month, but not as often as every week	54%
Less than once a month	19%
Average: 2.08 times per month	

In this chapter, we have presented findings showing that a mentoring program had a greater impact on youth in relationships with a higher frequency of telephone contact. Thus, mentoring programs that ensure that mentors and youth are engaging in frequent communication (and also take steps to monitor the quality of the communication) are more likely to be effective than are similar mentoring programs in which there is less frequent contact. If a program operator measures the frequency of contact and finds that matches have at least as frequent contact as those in the SAS sample, then it is reasonable to assume that the program is having a positive effect on academic behavior and performance, as was found in the SAS study (Johnson, 1998).

OVERALL RELATIONSHIP QUALITY BENCHMARK

This benchmark measures the youth's level of satisfaction with the relationship.

SCALE ITEM

How would you describe your relationship with your mentor?

1. We talk about things that are very important to me.
2. We do things together that I enjoy.
3. I'm excited about getting together.
4. I wish I had a different mentor.
   Ratings: Often = 3, Sometimes = 2, Rarely or Never =1.
5. I don't think my mentor understands me very well.
6. I respect my mentor a lot.
7. We have a very close relationship.
8. I wish we got together more often.
9. I would like our relationship to be closer.
   Ratings: True = 1, False = 0.

SCALE CONSTRUCTION

The ratings of answers 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7 are summed, for a total value ranging from 3 to 11. A "strong" relationship is a value greater than 10; a "moderate" relationship is a value of 9 or 10; and a "weak" relationship is a value less than 9.

Benchmark Categories	SAS Levels
Strong relationship	32%
Moderate relationship	41%
Weak relationship	27%
Average Rating: 9.2 points	

In this chapter, we have presented findings showing that a mentoring program had a greater impact on youth in which relationships were rated as strong. Thus, mentoring programs that ensure that mentors and youth are in satisfying relationships are more likely to be effective than are similar mentoring programs in which youth are not satisfied with the quality of their relationship. If a program operator measures the quality of a relationship and finds that youth view their relationships at least as positively as do those in the SAS sample, then it is reasonable to assume that the program is having a positive effect on academic behavior and performance, as was found in the SAS study (Johnson, 1998).

YOUTH: DISAPPOINTMENT BENCHMARK

This scale measures the youth's sense of disappointment in the mentor and the relationship (for example, not being asked about themselves, being made fun of or being made to feel stupid).

SCALE ITEMS[1]

1. My mentor makes fun of me in ways I don't like.
2. Sometimes my mentor promises we will do something, then we don't.
3. When my mentor gives me advice, makes me feel stupid.
4. I feel I can't trust my mentor with secrets, would tell parent/guardian.
5. I wish my mentor asked me more about what I think.
6. I wish my mentor knew me better.

   Ratings: Very true = 4, Sort of true = 3, Not very true = 2, Not at all true = 1

SCALE CONSTRUCTION

The ratings of the six items are summed. The total is divided by six to get a scale that ranges from 1 to 4.

Benchmark Categories	BBBS Levels	
	Ever-Matched	Still-Matched
2.5 or higher (highly disappointed)	14%	8%
2.49 to 1.5	46%	44%
1.49 to 1.0	41%	48%
Average rating	*1.73*	*1.83*

In this chapter, we have demonstrated that youth who feel more satisfied with their mentor and the relationship are more likely to show improvement in their behaviors and attitudes than are youth with less favorable impressions. Thus, mentoring programs that can create more satisfying relationships are more likely to be effective than are similar mentoring programs that create less satisfying relationships. If a program operator measures the youth disappointment levels and finds that they score at least as well as the BBBS program did, then it is reasonable to assume that the program is having a positive effect on academic behavior and performance and on drug and alcohol initiation, as was found in the BBBS study (Tierney and Grossman, 1995).

YOUTH-CENTERED BENCHMARK

This scale measures the degree to which the youth perceives the mentor asking for their input and centering their activities around things they enjoy.

SCALE ITEMS[1]

1. Your mentor almost always asks you what you want to do.
2. Your mentor is always interested in what you want to do.
3. Your mentor and you like to do a lot of the same things.
4. Your mentor thinks of fun and interesting things to do.

   Ratings: For the first four items: Is your mentor really like that = 4, Kind of like that = 3 , not really like that = 2, Not at all like that = 1?
5. Do you and your mentor do things you really want to do?

   Ratings: How often this happens: Pretty often = 4, Sometimes = 3, Not very often = 2, Hardly ever = 1

SCALE CONSTRUCTION

The ratings of the five items are summed. The total is divided by five to get a scale that ranges from 1 to 4.

Benchmark Categories	BBBS Levels	
	Ever-Matched	Still-Matched
4.0 (very youth centered)	40%	50%
3.0 to 3.9	47%	44%
1.0 to 2.9	13%	6%
Average rating	*3.53*	*3.69*

In this chapter, we have demonstrated that youth who feel that their mentor is youth centered are more likely to show improvement in their behaviors and attitudes than are youth who feel their mentor is less youth centered. Thus, mentoring programs that can create more satisfying relationships are more likely to be effective than are similar mentoring programs that create less satisfying relationships. If a program operator measures the youth-centeredness levels and finds that they score at least as well as the BBBS program did, then it is reasonable to assume that the program is having a positive effect on academic behavior and performance and on drug and alcohol initiation, as was found in the BBBS study (Tierney and Grossman, 1995).

YOUTH'S EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT BENCHMARK

This benchmark measures the degree to which the youth enjoys the relationship and is emotionally engaged in it (for example, whether the youth is happy, feels special, is ignored or bored).

SCALE ITEMS[6]

When I'm with my mentor, I feel

- Happy
- Excited
- Special
- Important
- Mad (R)
- Bored (R)
- Disappointed (R)
- Ignored (R)

Ratings: Very true = 4, Sort of true = 3, Not very true = 2, Not at all true = 1

For the items marked (R) or reverse, Very true = 4, Sort of true = 3, Not very true = 2, and Not at all true = 1.

SCALE CONSTRUCTION

The ratings of the eight items are summed. The total is divided by eight to get a scale that ranges from 1 to 4.

Benchmark Categories	BBBS Levels	
	Ever-Matched	Still-Matched
4.0 (highly engaged)	9%	28%
3.0 to 3.9	57%	60%
1.0 to 2.9	23%	12%
Average rating	*3.43*	*3.57*

In this chapter, we have demonstrated that youth who feel better about being around their mentor are more likely to show improvement in their behaviors and attitudes than are youth who feel less positive. Thus, mentoring programs that can create more satisfying relationships are more likely to be effective than are similar mentoring programs that create less satisfying relationships. If a program operator measures the emotional engagement of youth and finds that they score at least as well as the BBBS program did, then it is reasonable to assume that the program is having a positive effect on academic behavior and performance and on drug and alcohol initiation, as was found in the BBBS study (Tierney and Grossman, 1995).

NEGATIVE-APPROACH BENCHMARK

This benchmark measures the caseworker's assessment of whether the mentor took a negative approach, pushing the youth too hard and having difficulty setting limits with the youth's family.

SCALE ITEMS[7]

1. The volunteer has difficulty setting limits with youth's family.
2. The volunteer pushes too hard.
3. The volunteer is judgmental about family.

Ratings: Very true = 4, Sort of true = 3, Not very true = 2, Not at all true = 1.

SCALE CONSTRUCTION

The ratings of the three items are summed. The total is divided by three to get a scale that ranges from 1 to 4.

Benchmark Categories	BBBS Levels	
	Ever-Matched	Still-Matched
More than 2.0	33%	8%
1.1 to 2.0	34%	51%
1.0	33%	41%
Average rating	*1.60*	*1.48*

In this chapter, we have demonstrated that when mentors take a positive approach, as gauged by the case manager, their youth are more likely to show improvement in their behaviors and attitudes than are youth whose mentors take a more negative approach. Thus, mentoring programs that can guide mentors to take more appropriate approaches are more likely to be effective than are similar mentoring programs that do not. If a program operator rates the mentors' approaches on this scale and finds that they score at least as well as the BBBS program did, then it is reasonable to assume that the program is having a positive effect on academic behavior and performance and on drug and alcohol initiation, as was found in the BBBS study (Tierney and Grossman, 1995).

APPENDIX NOTES

1 Not all SAS relationships, however, lasted the full five years. Sometimes students left the Philadelphia school system; sometimes they were removed from the program for not cooperating with program expectations; and sometimes students did not enter the SAS program until their junior or even senior year of high school.

2 "Positive" does not always mean high. For example, a "positive" rating could be either a low level of disappointment or a high level of emotional engagement.

3 One outcome not listed above is self-esteem or self-worth. This is an outcome often considered to be positively affected by mentoring. Neither the BBBS nor the SAS evaluations were able to capture this effect using the measures selected. In the BBBS evaluation, Harter's Global Self-Worth Measure was used, while the SAS evaluation used the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Robinson et al., 1991). Among both groups of nonparticipant youth, measured self-esteem increased. Among the BBBS controls, self-worth scores increased by 0.64 (1 is low, 4 is high) over 18 months, while among the mentored Little Brothers and Little Sisters the measure increased by 0.92. Even though the change was positive, our analysis indicates that this is not significantly different from the increase that would have occurred naturally with maturity among this age group.

4 The alpha value of the scale in the BBBS impact sample was 0.80.

5 The alpha value of the scale in the BBBS impact sample was 0.78.

6 The alpha value of the scale in the BBBS impact sample was 0.83.

7 The alpha value of the scale in the BBBS impact sample was 0.71.

The Cost of Mentoring

Douglas L. Fountain
Amy Arbreton

The successes of mentoring programs are well-documented and grounded in empirical evidence. A 1995 impact study of Big Brothers Big Sisters, a mentoring program that provides weekly one-on-one contact with a supportive adult, found that mentoring is particularly effective in several areas Americans care about most: preventing drug use, improving school attendance and performance, and decreasing violence (Tierney and Grossman, 1995).

Recognizing the importance of caring adults in the lives of our nation's youth, attendees at the April 1997 President's Summit issued a call to provide mentors for the millions of at-risk youth who could benefit from the support a mentor can provide. As a result, considerable activity at the national, state and local levels is under way to increase the number of mentoring opportunities available for youth, and to provide further evaluation of the effectiveness of different types of mentoring programs. These programs are seen as increasingly attractive, with local and national leaders and other decision-makers looking at mentoring as a strategy to help youth grow into mature and responsible members of society.

While evidence regarding the potential outcomes and effectiveness of mentoring programs is being gathered, very little is known about the cost of providing mentoring, or the cost of increasing the number of mentors available to youth.

One of the first questions on the minds of decision-makers these days is what it really costs to expand mentoring. Unfortunately, this simple question begs several more: cost of what type of mentoring program and costs paid by whom? Mentoring programs, like many community-based services, leverage additional resources in the form of donated goods or volunteer time. How should these resources be viewed when we look at the cost of mentoring programs? Ultimately, answers to these types of questions can help leaders decide the relative "value" of funding one program versus another. In addition, decision-makers use information about costs—and perceptions about the value that is returned—to hold programs accountable.

This chapter begins to address these questions with regard to programs that provide mentors to school-age children. Using a methodology we developed for this purpose, we gathered data from a sample of mentoring programs and estimated the cost per youth of providing mentors to those previously underserved. In this study, we also identified the typical financing, expenditures and staffing patterns of the sampled mentoring programs.

At least three audiences can benefit from this analysis:

- **Mentoring programs** need this data to help them understand how their programs compare to other types of mentoring programs.
- **Community planners** need this data to help estimate resources that will be needed to expand mentoring programs or start new ones.[1]
- **Policymakers and other decision-makers** need this information to evaluate program and policy options based on demonstrable outcomes.

The goal of this analysis is to decide what mentoring programs cost, but not to judge whether the programs studied are efficient. To determine efficiency, we would need more information about the quality of the services provided or the outcomes achieved. Cost data alone are never sufficient for making program, planning or policy decisions. Cheaper is not always better, even if low cost helps buy more. Without information about the outcomes or quality of services, cost data will only lead to selection of the cheaper alternative.

The next section defines concepts used to talk about costs. The data source and methodology for this analysis, and the results of our survey, follow in the next sections. In the results and discussion section, we discuss sources of funding; characteristics of mentoring programs in terms of staffing, youth and weekly time spent on activities; and costs per youth served. The final section includes further analysis of the costs and requirements associated with expanding mentoring programs. This chapter concludes with implications for further analysis, research efforts and planning.

COST ANALYSIS OBJECTIVES: WADING THROUGH THE JARGON

Cost analyses are designed to help describe how programs work using *dollars, staff* and *numbers of youth* as standard bases for comparison. Program operating costs, to be useful for program comparisons or for decision-making, typically need to be stated as proportions or ratios, such as dollars per youth. For example, consider trying to compare one program with a budget of $150,000 to another program with a budget of $100,000. Although the budget of one is higher, is it really more expensive?

One of the first questions on the minds of decision-makers these days is what it really costs to expand mentoring.

Knowing that the first program serves 150 youth and the other program serves 100 youth helps. Both programs cost $1,000 per youth.

Cost analysis by itself says nothing about the relative outcomes or quality of the mentoring services in programs of different cost. With good outcome data, we could express costs in terms of outcomes achieved (e.g., reduced incidence of drug abuse or increase in school retention) or economic benefits achieved (improvements in earnings).

For those who have not spent their careers studying cost data, the terminology seems more like jargon and terms appear to be used interchangeably. How do revenue, budget, expense and cost differ? Or budget cost, off-budget cost and total cost? What is the difference between staff and "full-time equivalent" staff? These differences and those of other related concepts are outlined in Exhibit 1. There are several important concepts in tallying the cost of mentoring programs, including the fact that many do not have budgets, that most rely on resources beyond financial ones, and that comparing programs requires that we standardize some of their features. We discuss each of these in turn.

Many mentoring programs do not have a distinct budget, are integrated within larger organizations and, hence, do not have their own separate budget. The specific costs of the mentoring component are not factored out of the larger program budget. Examples of the types of expenses that could be covered by the parent organization are salaries, benefits, office expenses and facilities. Identifying the correct level of budget and expense requires in-depth discussion with program staff.

There is a difference between what programs have in their budgets and the total resources needed to run a program. Although many programs receive considerable financial support from the community, most also have volunteers who contribute time, as well as receive donated goods and services from related agencies or from the community. The values of these "in-kind" goods and services constitute "off budget" expenses or costs.

Donated facilities, volunteer time and donated office supplies are parts of the off-budget cost. A similar distinction is made between paid staff and total staff. Paid staff are those who are paid by the program—their positions and salaries are reflected in the budget. Additional individuals may contribute time to the mentoring program, e.g., as volunteer mentors; these individuals may be termed off-budget staff. Budget and off-budget staff together make up total staff.

Total cost is the sum of budget and off-budget costs. The total cost is important to know because it *represents the maximum that a program would have to supply out of its own budget to provide a particular service level if the program does not receive contributed resources (time and other goods and services) from the community.*

Standard metrics are required to compare budgets, expenditures and staffing in mentoring programs. We have already shown how cost per youth is more useful than budget comparisons. Another important metric for comparison is the relationship between administration time and time spent in direct services to youth. Mentoring programs provide a range of services directly to youth, called "direct services." Program activities such as recruiting and training mentors are called administrative support or "indirect services." The ratio of direct services to indirect services is frequently calculated to compare the relative proportion of the two.

A third metric is used to compare staff across programs, namely full-time equivalents (FTEs). Many of the people who work in a program may only work a fraction of a potential work week (40 hours) for the program. FTE staff represent a method for standardizing the number of staff that work in a program—for example, most volunteers only spend a few hours per week mentoring. The FTE is calculated by summing the hours that one or more people work in a week and dividing that by 40 hours. For

EXHIBIT 1
BASIC TERMINOLOGY IN COST ANALYSIS

	Budget Financing that is planned to be available to a program, to cover certain expenses	**Off-Budget** Donated goods and services, including volunteer time
Revenue	The amount of financing received by programs	None—all revenue is part of the budget
Expense	Cash outlays for salaries, facilities, transportation, and other goods and services for which programs pay cash	None—all expenses involve cash outlays and are part of the budget
Cost	Same as expense	The dollar value of donated goods, services and contributed time
Facilities and space, utilities	Rented, leased or owned space covered by a budget	Donated or borrowed space, not paid for by a program budget
Staff	Paid staff	Volunteer staff
Full-time equivalent staff (FTE staff)	The amount of time for paid work in a week, divided by 40 hours	The amount of time spent by volunteers during a week, divided by 40 hours
Cost per annual youth	Budget divided by number of youth served annually	Estimated value of donated goods and services, divided by annual youth served

example, one person who works 40 hours is "1 FTE." One person who works 20 hours is "0.5 FTE." Three people who each work 20 hours per week are "1.5 FTEs" (3 x 20 hours/40 hours per week = 60/40 = 1.5). Calculating staff in terms of FTEs makes it possible to compare programs on the basis of the relative amount of work going to the mentoring program.

Within this context we designed and implemented a structured cost analysis. In the next section we describe the methods used in this study.

METHODS

The Lewin Group developed an instrument to obtain the following information:

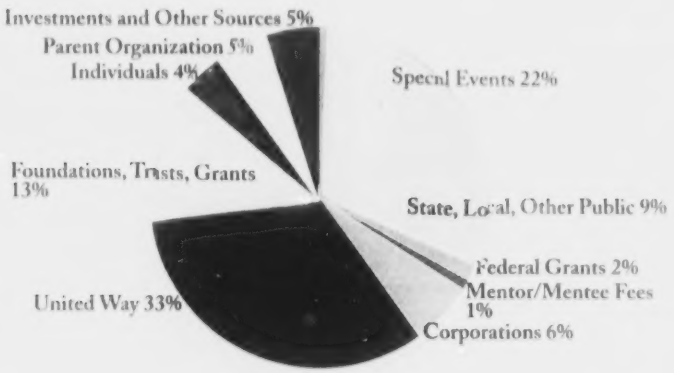
- **Basic descriptive information** about the organization and its services (affiliations, number of current and annual youth, proportion of youth in one-on-one versus group mentoring);
- **Budget information** (whether the mentoring program has a distinct budget, the total budget, sources of revenue);
- **Staffing** (number of paid staff, school district staff who help support the program, and other community volunteers, as well as the hours per week they work, salary level for the paid staff, and the breakdown of whether they are primarily mentors, other professionals, managers or office support);
- **Levels of other expenses** (for budget and off-budget expenses covered by the school district or provided by the community) **by category** (stipends, benefits, office expenses, facilities, transportation, advertising, line-item screening and training, youth activities, special services, insurance, indirect expenses paid to parent organization, and other expenses); and
- **Allocation of staff time** across a series of activities (mentor recruitment, mentor intake and screening, mentor training, youth tutoring, other youth interaction, community presentations, fundraising, and other support).

The sampling strategy was to complete interviews with 50 mentoring programs selected from the database of 720 mentoring programs that had responded to a program survey conducted as part of P/PV's study of Mentoring for School-Age Children. The P/PV study identified over 2,000 mentoring programs through a national "snowball" process in which key informants and mentoring programs helped identify other mentoring programs in communities. The P/PV sample includes programs from every state in the United States, plus the District of Columbia. The sample includes Big Brother Big Sister programs, Campfire programs, and a host of "standalone" mentoring programs identified through the snowball process. In P/PV's survey of mentoring programs, about one-fifth (18%) were found to be conducting group mentoring with a ratio of one mentor to more than one youth. To ensure that we would be able to estimate the differences in cost between one-on-one mentoring models and group mentoring models, we drew a stratified random sample. Ultimately, 52 out of 100 sampled programs were interviewed.

There are several reasons why we sampled twice as many programs as interviewed. First, we wanted to finish the survey within six weeks. During this time, many of the mentoring program contacts were preparing and defending budgets as part of local community agency budget processes, or were otherwise quite busy. Moreover, the interview required programs to compile specific financial information that in some cases had never been compiled. This included estimating the time contributed by community members and school district personnel, donated goods and services, and allocations of staff time across activities. For most programs, the process of compiling these estimates was difficult and time consuming.

Nearly half of the programs rely on multiple funding sources, but few cited more than two or three.

EXHIBIT 2
PERCENT OF FUNDS BY SOURCE, ON AVERAGE, IN 51 OF 52 PROGRAMS SURVEYED



The cost of operating mentoring programs substantially exceeds the funds available, (so most) programs turn to donated or in-kind contributions of goods and services. They leverage about $1 for every $1 in their budget.

There are no systematic or significant differences in any characteristics between programs participating in the interviewing process and those not participating, based on an analysis using data from the original snowball survey completed by P/PV. For example, while nonparticipating programs appear to work with more youth (274 versus 173), the difference is not statistically significant. Among participants compared with nonparticipants, the average number of mentors and length of contact with youth are greater (118 versus 97) and longer (25 months versus 19 months). Again, these differences are not statistically significant.

FINDINGS

PROJECT FUNDING

The mentoring programs represented in this study have budgets ranging from under $500 to $6.5 million. About 20 percent of the programs have budgets under $20,000, and about 10 percent have budgets of over $500,000. The average budget is $324,000 per program, but the median program budget is only about $70,000. Programs were able to identify their sources of funds, which we subsequently coded into the following categories: mentor fees, mentee fees, individual gifts, corporate gifts, foundation grants, United Way, special events, public (federal, state, local and other), and other funds. Few programs cited more than two or three sources of funds, but more than 40 percent rely on multiple funding sources. Of the programs interviewed, 40 percent receive United Way funds and 40 percent conduct special fundraising events. Fewer than one-third (29%) of mentoring programs receive funds from a parent organization; 25 percent receive funds from corporate gifts, and 21 percent receive support from foundations, trusts and/or individual gifts. About 19 percent of programs receive state funds and 13 percent receive local government support.

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Averaging over all 52 programs, corporate donations far outweigh any other single source of funding—54 percent of total expenditures across the 52 programs studied. However, this is severely skewed by particularly large corporate gifts to one corporation-run program. Exhibit 2 shows the average amount of support from different sources, excluding that program. As can be seen, United Way and special event fundraisers account for the largest sources of revenue on average (33% and 22%, respectively).

To build on this understanding of average funding across all programs, we sought to better illustrate funding of smaller, midsize and larger programs. We did this by selecting a 25 and a 75 percentile program and the two median programs based on budget size. The small program receives most support from individual giving ($23,000 out of its $25,000 budget), and the rest from its parent organization. One of the median programs derives 40 percent of its budget from local government sources, 19 percent from foundations, 14 percent from corporate gifts, 4 percent from United Way, and the balance from other sources. The other "median" program receives about 57 percent of its support from corporate gifts, and the balance from individuals. The larger program is a school-based program that receives two-thirds of its support from the parent organization (school district) and the balance from other local government sources.

We had expected to find patterns in funding related to the size of the program. In particular, we expected that smaller programs would more likely have one or two sources of funds, and that larger programs would be more financially diversified. We did not, however, find this pattern. Smaller programs were as likely as larger programs to receive funds from corporate sources, United Way or other sources. Further, more small programs than we had expected had more than two or three sources of funding.

EXHIBIT 3
THE AVERAGE PROGRAM RECEIVES DONATED TIME AND SERVICES WORTH $1 FOR EVERY $1 IN ITS BUDGET

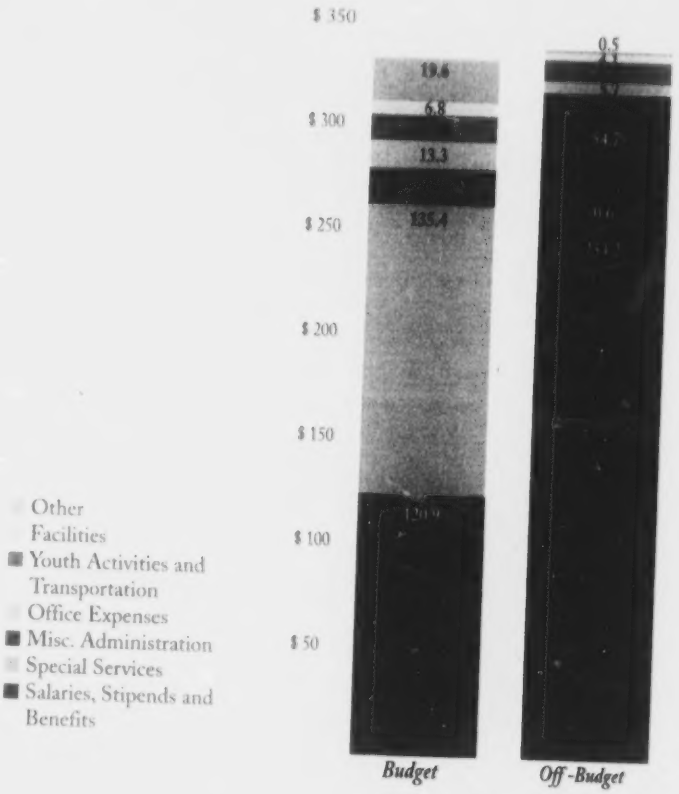

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EXHIBIT 4
TYPICAL PAID STAFF AND VOLUNTEER LEVELS, TOTAL AND PER YOUTH

	On Budget/ Paid Staff	Off-Budget/ Volunteers	Total
Mentors	0.3	9.9	10.2
Professional Staff	1.7	0.5	2.2
Managers	1.7	0.8	2.5
Support Staff	1.1	0.3	1.4
Total FTEs	**4.8**	**11.5**	**16.3**
Youth per FTE	**61**	**25**	**18**
Total Individual Staff	**8**	**178**	**185**
Youth per Individual	**38**	**1.6**	**1.6**

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PROGRAM BUDGETS AND "LEVERAGING" OF OTHER RESOURCES

Like most community service programs, the cost of operating mentoring programs substantially exceeds the funds available to programs. As a result, mentoring programs turn to donated or in-kind contributions of goods and services, particularly the time of volunteer mentors. To successfully obtain and manage these resources, mentoring programs rely on paid staff and budgeted resources. Some programs are better at leveraging than others, suggesting that many programs could use technical assistance on how to leverage resources more successfully.

Using information provided in the interviews, we were able to determine the total cost of running a mentoring program—a cost that includes contributed goods and services and volunteer time. This is necessary because sometimes programs will receive fewer community contributions, or may have to increase their stipends to volunteers. Calculating the total cost gives a "high end" value to be used as a counterpart to the program's budget, representing how much extra financing the program might have to obtain to cover the expenses. Respondents estimated the value of donated goods and services, and provided the approximate number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff who contribute time. We estimated the value of volunteer time to be the same as the average wage for paid mentoring program staff—approximately $23,000 per FTE. This may be high or low relative to what some mentors could earn in the labor market. For example, many volunteers are highly paid professionals in hospitals or other private industries. Other volunteers include work-study students and retired persons.

As shown in Exhibit 3, mentoring programs leverage the equivalent of about $1 for every $1 in their budget. The average program, with a budget of almost $324,000, receives about $330,000 in donated goods and services and volunteer time. The total cost of operating a mentoring program, from the economic perspective, is the total that comes from adding budget and off-budget costs. This means that the average mentoring program "costs" about $654,000.

The average mentoring program has about eight paid staff and 178 volunteers.

Program budgets are allocated primarily to special services (42%) and staff compensation (37%). Special services include counseling, tutoring and other direct services purchased on behalf of youth. Approximately 11.2 percent of program operating budgets are spent on facilities, office expenses and other administrative expenses such as insurance. The majority of expenditures from off-budget sources are estimated values applied to community volunteer time (77%). In other words, if the programs wanted to hire and pay mentors rather than rely on volunteers, the average program would have to spend $254,000 (the median program would have to spend about $54,000).

STAFFING

Staffing in mentoring programs includes a mixture of mentors, professionals, managers and support personnel. The average mentoring program has about eight staff and 178 volunteers, almost all of whom are mentors. These staff and volunteers serve approximately 290 youth annually, or about 1.6 youth per mentor on average. As discussed previously, using the number of staff is an inexact way of comparing the amount of work required to run mentoring programs. Since most staff and virtually all volunteers work part time (less than 40 hours a week) in mentoring programs, it is useful to standardize the number of people who work or volunteer in mentoring based on a typical 40-hour week. Recall that dividing the total hours worked by type of staff (provided by interview respondents) by 40 hours produces full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. As mentioned before, one staff member who works 40 hours per week is 1 FTE; two staff members who each work 20 hours per week are also considered 1 FTE.

When we asked mentoring programs about involvement of school district personnel in their programs, we learned that school district per-

EXHIBIT 5
HOURS PER WEEK ON TASKS BY PAID STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

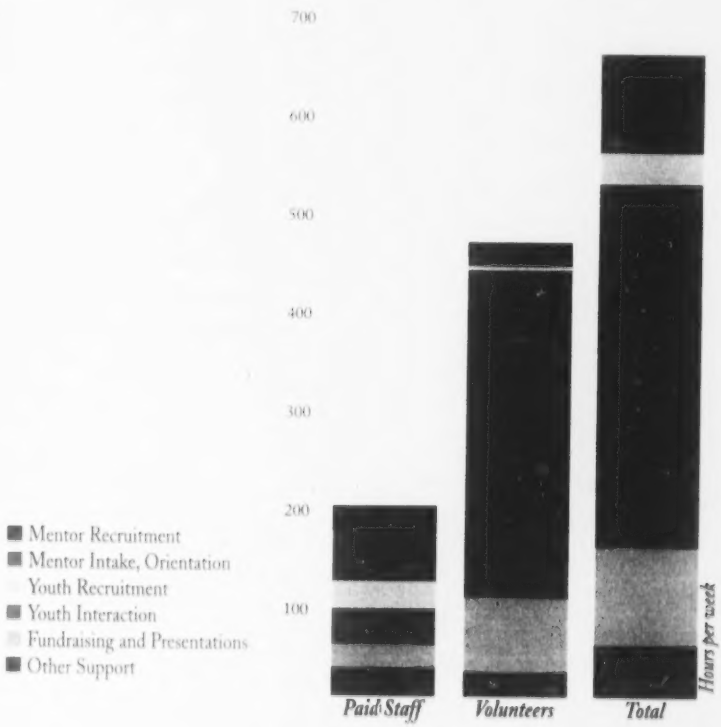


EXHIBIT 6
AVERAGE BUDGET AND PER CAPITA TOTAL COST ANNUAL OF VARIOUS PROGRAMS

	Number of Annual Youth	Budget per Youth Served	Total Cost per Youth Served*
Average	**291**	**$1,114**	**$2,289**
95 percentile	1,900	$2,447	$6,318
75 percentile	289	$1,067	$2,640
50 (Median)	**150**	**$685**	**$1,533**
25 percentile	57	$347	$713
5 percentile	12	$24	$189

Note: Percentiles are used to assess ranges or distributions of data: "50 percentile or median" means that half the values in a distribution are higher and half the values are lower; "75 percentile" means that 25 percent of the values are higher and 75 percent are lower.

* Includes budget and off-budget costs.

sonnel contribute less than 1 FTE on average. Since the mentoring programs do not pay them for their work, they are combined (see Exhibit 4) with other volunteers, even though some of their paid responsibilities in the schools may include work with a mentoring program.

The average mentoring program uses 16.3 FTE staff, most of whom are community volunteers (11.5 FTEs) rather than paid staff (4.8 FTEs). About two-thirds of the paid staff in the average program are either managers or other professionals (e.g., teachers, counselors); the rest either work as mentors or support staff. The majority of staff who work with mentoring programs are mentors (10.2 FTEs). Most mentors work only one or two hours a week; however, since some mentors work more hours, the average is about 2.5 hours per week per mentor.

To compare these staffing levels across programs, it is also a good idea to consider FTEs in terms of the ratio of staff and mentors to youth served each year. The average program, which serves 291 youth in a year, has 1 FTE paid staff member for every 61 youth, and 1 FTE volunteer for every 25 youth.

We expected to find that paid staff and volunteers play different roles and carry out different activities in mentoring programs. Accordingly, we asked respondents to estimate how much time they spent in a typical week on a series of administrative and mentoring activities across the FTEs reported by category. We asked about a range of direct service and administrative responsibilities, including mentor recruitment, intake, training, youth/mentor matching, interactions with youth, and other administrative and networking activities.

Exhibit 5 demonstrates how paid staff use their time to administer programs and manage mentors, and how volunteers spend time in addition

The average program spends $1,114 per youth per year, but the range is wide, from $12 to $1,900 per youth. The median is $685 per annual youth.

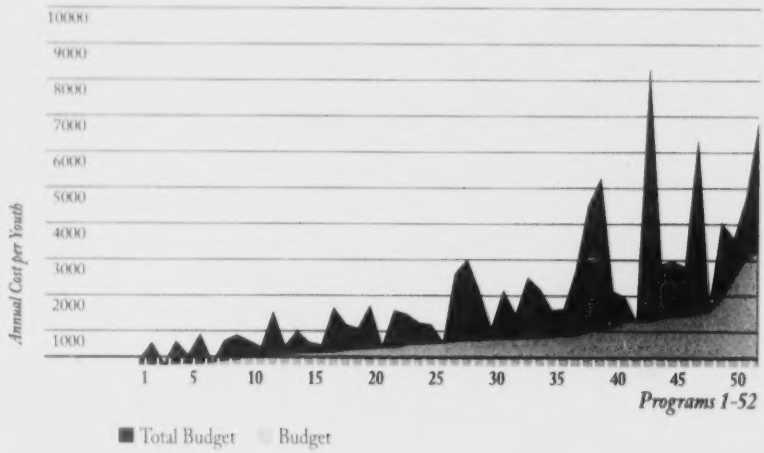
to mentoring. Over half of the total hours spent by paid staff and volunteers are devoted to youth interaction. Paid staff spend approximately 80 percent of their time on administration, and the balance on direct service to youth. For example, one-quarter of the time spent by paid staff goes to mentor intake and orientation (52 out of 192 hours), making it the single largest time commitment by paid staff. It is volunteers who spend the most time working with youth. Three-fourths of the time spent by community volunteers in mentoring programs is devoted to mentoring. The remaining quarter of volunteers' time, including those who are considered primarily to be mentors, is devoted to administrative and support tasks.

COST PER YOUTH SERVED

Cost per youth served is the most useful single statistic for understanding the relative costs across programs. Before we talk about this ratio, however, we must first describe the range of youth in the programs we interviewed. Over the previous year, these programs had served from 5 to over 4,200 youth, with 291 on average and 150 youth served in the median program (see Exhibit 6). On the day the programs were interviewed, the number of youth they mentored ranged from 5 to 2,000, with 192 on average (70 in the median program) participating and another 18 in the process of being matched. The fact that fewer youth were currently matched with mentors suggests either that there has been attrition in youth involvement during the year, or that mentoring programs "replace" matches during the course of a year.

We found that, in a given year, the average program spends $1,114 per youth, but the range is wide, from $12 to $1,900 per youth. The median expenditure is $685 per annual youth. As discussed previously, the full economic cost of mentoring includes the value of donated goods and services from school districts and other community sources. Donated goods and services, including the time of volunteer mentors, raise the average total cost of mentoring each youth to $2,289, or $1,533 in the median program. Also, we observed that programs with low budget costs per youth

EXHIBIT 7
BUDGET AND TOTAL (INCLUDING OFF-BUDGET) ANNUAL COST PER YOUTH SERVED IN 52 MENTORING PROGRAMS



tend to have low total costs per youth, and that programs with relatively high budget costs per youth have high total costs per youth, too (see Exhibit 7). No program is able to provide mentoring for less than an estimated total cost of $189 per annual youth; some programs rely on budget plus donated resources that total over $9,000 per youth. Exhibit 7 also demonstrates that some programs are more successful than others at leveraging off-budget resources.

Half of the mentoring programs that participated in our study reported off-budget expenses valued between half and two times the program's budget. An additional third of the participants reported off-budget support valued at two to five times the program's budget. The remaining programs (about 16%) were split between those that receive virtually no additional support and those that receive support in excess of five times the value of their budget.

One-on-one programs cost more per youth than group mentoring does...(but) the potential for individual contact—more intensive contact—is greater in the one-on-one programs.

ONE-ON-ONE VERSUS GROUP MENTORING MODELS

Our study collected additional data on the use of one-on-one and group mentoring models. There are several reasons why group mentoring is used. First, programs sometimes encounter a shortage of available volunteers to be matched with youth; using a group mentoring strategy allows youth to be matched more quickly. Second, group mentoring is offered to entice volunteers who feel uncomfortable about meeting one-on-one with a youth, but feel they can handle a group situation. Mentors' comfort with volunteering is increased when they do not shoulder the entire responsibility for mentoring youth. Most programs offer both group and one-on-one opportunities for volunteers, perhaps hoping that if volunteers have the opportunity to work with multiple youth they might want to choose a youth to mentor one-on-one. Other programs offer group mentoring in order to foster a group dynamic, facilitating social interaction among youth.

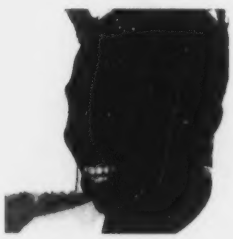
Apart from philosophical reasons for using a group mentoring strategy, such as to promote positive peer social interaction, group mentoring may be less expensive per youth than one-on-one. This assumes that fewer mentors would translate to fewer necessary resources to support the youth/mentor match. This study attempted to explore the relative cost differences, in the hope that such an added value analysis could be performed at a later date if systematic effectiveness data were collected. This information will be valuable for programs that are just starting and plan to implement a group format, or those that are considering changing their strategy to a group format for cost savings.

About 80 percent of the P/PV study programs indicate that they view themselves as offering primarily one-on-one mentoring. The rest promote group mentoring, with a ratio of one or more mentors to more than one youth. Seeking to understand the difference somewhat more systematically between what respondents reported to be groups versus one-on-one, we asked respondents "what proportion of youth meet with mentors one-on-one" and "what proportion of youth meet in groups." The answers to these questions further refine the distinction between the two approaches and provide an important methodological point for future study.

When we analyzed the data, we adopted a 60/40 rule: if 60 percent or more of the youth are seen one-on-one, then the program is coded as primarily one-on-one, and vice versa. Programs that reported having between 40 and 60 percent of youth in either one-on-one or group mentoring were considered to be hybrid

programs, because there is such a small relative difference in the proportion of youth in either group. Overall, 80 percent of youth meet one-on-one, and 20 percent of youth meet in groups. Exhibit 8 summarizes the results of this re-classification.

Exhibit 9 displays the differences in characteristics of one-on-one versus group mentoring programs. The median number of youth served in one-on-one programs is larger than the median number served in group-based programs (90 versus 52 youth), though this difference is not statistically significant. Each type of program serves a comparable number of youth per year. One-on-one programs have more staff than do group programs (10.6 versus 3.9 FTEs), more of whom are mentors (60% versus 48%). However, the number of paid staff is comparable (3 FTEs versus 2 FTEs), meaning that one-on-one programs rely more heavily on school district staff and community volunteers.



Not surprisingly, one-on-one programs cost more per youth than group mentoring does. The average budget cost per annual youth served in one-on-one programs is over twice that of group programs ($1,030 versus $408). This difference is statistically significant ($p<.05$). One of the primary reasons for interest in comparing group versus one-on-one models is that group programs, by virtue of being less expensive, may offer a strategy for expansion without dramatic increases in costs. Although it is logical and evident that group mentoring reduces the average cost of mentoring, the comparison is not complete without comparing the relative quality and outcomes attained in one-on-one versus group mentoring. Even though there is interaction with youth, is the quality of the adult mentoring as high?

EXHIBIT 8
PROGRAMS' SELF-CLASSIFICATION VERSUS CALCULATED CLASSIFICATION (NUMBER OF PROGRAMS)

Primary Model Type Indicated by Program	Classification Using Proportion of Youth Meeting One-on-One		
	Same	Changed	"Hybrid"
One-on-One	20	6	3
Group	11	9	3
Total	31	15	6

EXHIBIT 9
PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS OF ONE-ON-ONE AND GROUP MENTORING PROGRAMS

	One-on-One Mentoring (n=29)	Group Mentoring (n=17)
Median Annual Youth	166	144
Median Number of Youth Seen One-on-One	100%	12.5%
Mentor FTEs as Percent of Total FTEs	60%	48%
Median Paid Staff (FTEs)	3	2
Other Staff (School Plus Community) (FTEs)	7.6	1.9
Median Budget Cost per Annual Youth	$1,030	$408

EXHIBIT 10
ANALYSIS OF MENTORING CONTACT AND COST PER HOUR OF CONTACT IN ONE-ON-ONE AND GROUP MENTORING PROGRAMS

	One-on-One Mentoring (n=29)	Group Mentoring (n=17)
Median Mentored Hours per Youth	60.0	80.0
Median Youth per Mentor	1.5	2.6
Annual "Adult-Youth Contact" Hours	40.0	30.8
Annual Cost per Youth	$1,030	$408
Average Cost per Individual Contact Hour	**$25.75**	**$13.25**

Note: Median mentored hours and median youth per mentor were supplied by data collected by P/PV. Annual adult-youth contact hours were calculated by dividing mentored hours per youth by the number of youth who typically meet with a mentor, or 40 hours in one-on-one programs and about 31 hours in group programs. Dividing annual cost by the annual adult-youth contact hours yields the average cost per individual contact hour.

EXHIBIT 11
LARGER PROGRAMS ARE NOT LESS EXPENSIVE

Program Size by Youth	Average Budget Cost Per Annual Youth Served
8-50 youth	$585
53-77 youth	$634
100-191 youth	$832
195-300 youth	$726
322-2140 youth	$1,289

Unfortunately, we do not currently have information about the quality and effectiveness of these alternative approaches to mentoring. However, one way to begin thinking about the relative quality of one-on-one and group mentoring is to consider the potential "intensity" of the mentoring that youth receive. Intensity may be a "poor man's proxy" for quality, and we do have some information regarding intensity.

The measures of intensity available in this study are total annual hours of mentoring per youth, and the average "individual adult-youth contact hours" (total mentoring hours divided by the youth-to-mentor ratio). One-on-one programs tend to provide fewer hours of mentoring (60 hours versus 80 for group) (Exhibit 10), though the difference is not statistically significant. However, programs that are primarily one-on-one typically have fewer youth per mentor compared to group programs (1.5 youth compared to 2.6 youth per mentor), which again reflects that most one-on-one programs have a number of youth who meet in groups. Still, this means that the potential for individual contact—more intensive contact—is greater in the one-on-one programs. The major caveat in this analysis, of course, is that youth do benefit from interacting, in positive and supervised environments, with other youth. This analysis only illustrates one way to consider the intensity of mentoring.

Taking intensity of the adult-youth interaction into account changes how we view the relative cost in one-on-one programs compared to group programs. The median cost per youth served is shown in Exhibit 9 to be $1,030 in one-on-one programs and about $408 in group mentoring programs—over 2.5 times more per youth in the one-on-one programs. However, when these cost figures are adjusted for the relative intensity of adult mentoring contact (by dividing the cost by annual adult-youth contact hours), the difference is reduced substantially (see Exhibit 10). One-on-one programs still cost more per youth contact hour ($25.75 compared to $13.25 in group programs), but the difference is less than two times higher, whereas it was over two and a half times higher before this adjustment. This

evidence suggests that program managers should not stop with simple information about comparative cost; it is worth collecting more information about the relative advantages of more intensive mentoring.

PROGRAM EXPANSION: DOES MORE YOUTH MEAN LESS COST PER YOUTH?

The data reported in this study can be used to help estimate the cost of expanding mentoring capacity in the United States. The study found that the average cost per annual youth is approximately $1,114, and that the average program serves 291 youth per year. To serve 100 more youth in a year, the average program would have to come up with over $111,000 in additional funding, hire one and a half to two more paid FTE staff, and recruit approximately four more FTE volunteers (or 60 to 65 more individual volunteers).

Several mentoring program managers have suggested that expanding their programs can decrease their cost per youth. We tested this concept on a very limited basis with our data by examining whether larger programs can serve more youth for less money per youth. The best way to determine whether programs become less expensive as they grow is to compare costs in a sample of programs as they change over time, but this type of data is not currently available to us. However, we ran several statistical regressions with our data to test whether there is a relationship between cost per annual youth and annual youth served. We hypothesized that cost would go down as the number of youth served increased. Our analysis did not support this hypothesis, even when controlling for certain program characteristics.

To examine the issue differently, we ordered the programs by size and grouped them into four groups of 10 programs, then we calculated the average cost per youth in each of the four groups. Smaller programs appeared to be less expensive than larger programs: $585 per annual youth in the smallest programs compared with $1,290 per annual youth in the largest programs (see Exhibit 11). Although the data revealed a trend, we found no statistically

Per youth costs are fairly constant across programs of different size.

significant relationship between the number of youth served in the program in a year and the cost per youth served.

There are several reasons why programs serving more youth may actually be more expensive. First, larger programs may need to pay more professionals to coordinate logistics and to recruit mentors. In addition, larger programs probably require more office space, which is difficult to obtain through donation and, hence, must be leased or purchased.

Large expansions in mentoring programs will also require increased involvement from communities. For mentoring programs to expand, we must ask whether community involvement in the form of donated goods, services and volunteer time would increase accordingly. If not, programs would have to pay for additional goods and services, causing the cost per youth to increase. For example, programs may need additional stipends or other payments to attract more mentors or to encourage current mentors to work with more youth. Some programs may match more youth per mentor, or choose group mentoring. Before making decisions, program officers and policymakers need good information about the comparable quality and outcomes that can be achieved if programs shift to group mentoring.

The success of programs in leveraging donated goods and services worth at least as much as their budgets is due primarily to the work of paid staff. Since leveraging is essential to these programs, program managers must carefully consider whether paid staff should increase their time working with youth or trying to get additional resources from the community. This trade-off could limit the ability of programs to expand to serve more youth.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study is the first to explore the costs of mentoring across a substantial number of mentoring programs. Analysis of our sample of 52 mentoring programs concludes that these programs serve approximately 291 youth annually at a cost of $1,114 per youth. The median program serves about 150 youth at a cost of $685 per youth. Most resources in mentoring programs are derived from United Way and special fundraising events. Moreover, we found that programs are able to leverage donated goods, services and volunteer time that is worth approximately $1 for every $1 in their budget.

We also observed that, on average, 185 individuals work in mentoring programs, of whom eight are paid staff and the balance are volunteers. Since most of the volunteers work only a couple of hours per week, the average program is staffed with less than five FTE paid staff and 11.5 FTE volunteers. This amounts to 61 youth per FTE paid staff, and 25 youth per FTE volunteer. Paid staff spend 80 percent of their time on administrative activities while volunteers spend 75 percent of their time meeting with youth.

The study builds on a program survey conducted by Public/Private Ventures, by drawing a random sample of mentoring programs from their database. While this database is not nationally exhaustive, it is a very large database of mentoring programs. We do not currently know how many other mentoring programs there are in the United States. Despite limitations, our sample is a critical starting point for future research.

There are two specific types of follow-on studies that this analysis suggests. First, studies of the characteristics and costs of one-on-one versus group-based mentoring programs are needed. Such studies should identify the relative intensity and quality of mentoring in the two models, and seek to identify relative outcomes achieved. Then, with good cost data available at the "sub-program" level, researchers can compare these types of programs. Second, we should seek to relate information about characteristics of youth and the severity of their problems to the costs, intensity and types of mentoring provided. Some youth may need more intensive support and different levels of mentoring; this relative need may also be associated with poorer outcomes unless more intensive services are provided.

Our major recommendation is that our cost data be combined with outcome data. Decision-makers today are increasingly interested in knowing how their investments will generate "payback" to society. Without outcome data, cost data generally lead to strategies to minimize cost. Ultimately, it is desirable and feasible to assess both the cost and the outcomes of mentoring programs simultaneously. For example, researchers should test different approaches to mentoring, and compare them in terms of both cost and the outcomes they achieve (cost-effectiveness analysis). Such analysis would support improved decision-making and planning.

NOTE

We greatly appreciate the hard work and time spent on the part of the mentoring programs responding to this survey. In addition, individual appreciation goes to Laurel Boykin who helped prepare the prototype instrument, Sonali Sharma who organized and completed data entry and analysis, and May Chao and Sarah Crow who assisted Ms. Boykin and Ms. Sharma in the interviews.

1 Unfortunately, these data do not identify the unique costs associated with starting a mentoring program, which can lead to high costs in the short run until a program stabilizes.

"The point is not only to generate funds but to generate much more programming."

MENTORING MATTERS: A NATIONAL SURVEY OF ADULTS MENTORING YOUNG PEOPLE

Kathryn Taaffe McLearn
Diane Colasanto
Cathy Schoen
Michele Yellowitz Shapiro

Adolescence is a time of risk and opportunity. During the critical transition to adulthood, youth are learning skills, attitudes and behaviors that will affect their lifelong ability to lead productive and healthy lives. In the search for interventions that could enhance this transition, mentoring has been widely noted for its potential to provide support and guidance. Out of the hope that caring adults can provide encouragement and impart skills and values necessary for later success in school and employment, new efforts are under way in cities across the nation to expand the number of adults willing to volunteer as mentors.

Over the past decade, The Commonwealth Fund, along with other nonprofit and public entities, has supported efforts to develop and test the value of innovative mentoring programs. Yet little information exists on a national basis about the types of youth in mentoring relationships, the impact of mentoring activities on youth, characteristics of the mentoring experience, the extent and variety of mentoring activities, adults most likely to volunteer as mentors, or features of successful mentoring relationships.

To enhance the nation's understanding of the effects of mentoring on youth and to learn from a broad array of mentoring relationships, The Commonwealth Fund commissioned Princeton Survey Research Associates to conduct a nationally representative survey, *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*.

METHODOLOGY

The survey consisted of telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 1,504 adults who have mentored at least one person age 10 to 18 during the past five years. The margin of error for the sample of qualified mentors is plus or minus four points.

Interviews were conducted in either English or Spanish, according to the respondent's preference. Two types of mentors were included in the sample: formal mentors participating in a structured mentoring program, either a national program such as Big Brothers Big Sisters or a local program such as those sponsored by a church or employers; and informal mentors who connected with youth through communities or family and are not sponsored by an organization. Informal relationships can include relationships among extended family members, for example, an aunt mentoring her niece.

Mentors were located by screening a random sample of adults 18 years and older in 7,500 households with telephones by asking a series of qualifying questions. The random telephone numbers were selected disproportionately from certain exchanges to increase the probability of selecting those likely to mentor based on previous research. Weighting was used in analysis to remove the disproportionality of the sample design. After weighting, the sample is unbiased and representative of all mentors living in households with telephones in the contiguous 48 states. Unless otherwise noted, results in the text were statistically significant at least at 95 percent level.

The survey consisted of telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 1,504 adults who have mentored at least one person age 10 to 18 in the past five years.

MENTORING IS A PREVALENT VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY FOR ADULTS

The approximately 7,500 adults who were contacted regarding their experiences as mentors received the following definition of being a "mentor":

> It usually involves spending time, one-on-one, with a particular child on a fairly regular basis over a period of time. A mentor provides support or guidance for the child in personal, academic and other areas of the child's life. These mentoring relationships can either be established through a formal program or they can be established through informal connections between the adults and the young person.

The survey finds that mentoring is a relatively prevalent community volunteer activity for adults who wish to help children or young people. Nearly one-third of adults (31%) had been a mentor at some point in his or her life. One of seven (14%) adults was currently mentoring a child of any age; just under half of these adults, or 7 percent of American adults, are currently mentoring a youth age 10 to 18. The vast majority of these mentoring relationships (83%) are formed through informal connections, and thus the adults are not a part of a formal mentoring program; 17 percent of adults are mentors through associations with formal mentoring programs. Based on reports of an array of possible volunteer activities with youth, mentoring occurs at rates comparable to other popular community activities, such as being involved in scouting (38%) or coaching a sports team (37%).

Adults who have mentored are more likely than other adults to be involved in volunteer activities with children and young people. Mentors are more likely than adults who have never been a mentor to have volunteered to help with organized sports teams (50% vs. 32%), Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts (48% vs. 33%), or Sunday school or religious activities (61% vs. 42%). Overall, adults who have mentored were

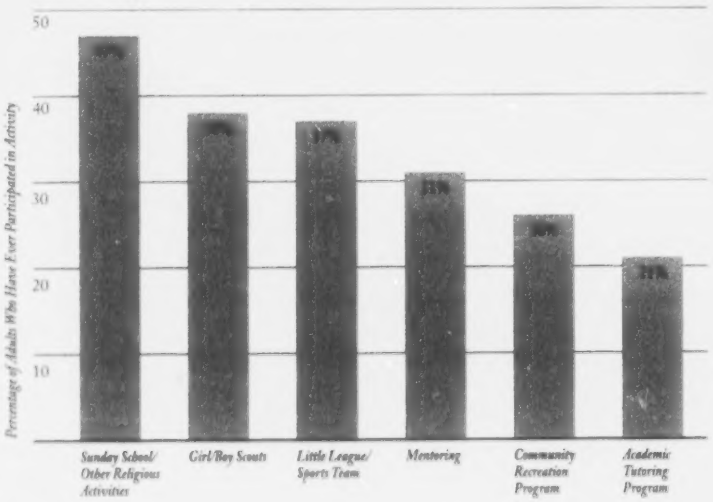
at least 50 percent more likely to participate in community volunteer activities involving youth than were those who have never mentored.

In addition, mentors are more likely than are adults who have never mentored to be college educated, have higher annual family income, and to have had a mentor when they were growing up. One of three mentors (32%) is college educated and four of 10 (44%) have incomes above $35,000. In contrast, among adults who have never mentored, only 20 percent are college-educated and one of three (31%) has an income above $35,000. Having a mentor as a youth also appeared to foster a willingness to mentor in the future. More than two-thirds (69%) of adults who have mentored had an adult other than their parent who provided them with ongoing guidance and support. In contrast, only 42 percent of those who have never mentored had a mentor when young.

No gender or racial differences exist among adults who mentor as compared with those who do not mentor, but adults who mentor tend to be younger than those who have not mentored. Only 6 percent of those who mentor are 65 years old or older as compared with 17 percent of adults who have never mentored.

Adults who were not mentors were asked to give the most important reason why they were not. The most common answer by far was that they did not feel they had enough free time to do mentoring (61%). In addition, 9 percent were not interested in mentoring; 6 percent did not feel qualified; and 6 percent did not know how to get involved in mentoring.

CHART 1
ADULT VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES WITH YOUTH: MENTORING IS A PREVALENT ACTIVITY



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People,* Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998.

TABLE 1
ADULTS WHO MENTOR ARE LIKELY TO BE INVOLVED IN VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES WITH CHILDREN

Adult Volunteer Activity	Total	Mentor	Never Mentor
Sunday school/ other religious activities	47%	61%	42%*
Little League/team sports	37	50	32*
Girl/Boy Scouts	38	48	33*
Academic tutoring programs	21	39	15*

* The never-mentored group differed from the mentored group at a 5 percent level of significance.

Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People,* Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998.

"My family does nothing with me. They're too busy working. So I'm always alone. With (my mentor) I've gone to the opera, to restaurants—we do everything together."

MENTORING IS REACHING AT-RISK YOUTH

Many young people growing up in America are at risk. They face problems with negative feelings about themselves and poor performance at school and frequently engage in risk-taking behaviors. All too often, youth are growing up in families where parents are coping with financial stress and their own personal problems and are simply not available or able to provide guidance and support.

The survey finds that mentoring is succeeding in reaching a high-risk group of adolescents, and mentors believe they are making a difference in youth's lives. Mentors believe that their mentoring relationships have been instrumental in helping youth solve problems, and that they have had a positive impact on the life of the young person they mentored.

Mentors report that eight of 10 young people in mentoring relationships have one or more problems out of a list of 12 problems investigated by the survey that could put their success in school, health or development at risk.[1] In addition, mentors report that nearly a quarter of young people in mentoring relationships (23%) have five or more problems.

The five most prevalent problems faced by young people in mentoring relationships are negative feelings about themselves (55%), poor relationships with family members (49%), poor grades (42%), hanging out with the wrong crowd (41%), and getting into trouble at school (36%). In addition, mentors report that approximately one of four mentees has problems with substance abuse, skipping school and getting into trouble outside of school. About one of 10 young people has run away from home, been physically or sexually abused, or has experienced an eating disorder. Unfortunately, there is no comparable national

data against which to compare these statistics to determine whether mentored youth have more problems than do average youth. However, compared with national data, youth in mentoring relationships are more likely to be a member of a minority group and less likely to be reared in a two-parent family.

Moreover, youth in mentoring relationships are often growing up in difficult family circumstances. Nearly half of the boys and girls in mentoring relationships (45%) are growing up in families with serious financial problems: more than one in three (38%) come from families that are struggling financially, and another 7 percent come from families that are financially desperate. When asked about other problems in the youth's home, nearly one-third (32%) of mentors report that the youth's parents appear to have serious problems with alcohol and drug abuse, mental health problems, trouble with the law or domestic violence.

Young people in mentoring relationships are often growing up without the benefit of two parents. Barely half (56%) of mentored young people live with two-parent families. However, youth in two-parent homes are less likely to have a mentor than are youth in other living arrangements (they make up 68% of the population but only 56% of the mentored youth). Youth who live with neither parent are the most likely to have a mentor (they comprise only 5 percent of the youth population and 12 percent of the mentored population).

Although many youth in mentoring relationships are judged to be at risk, they are regarded by their mentors to be quite resilient. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of youth were judged by their mentor to be motivated to be good students, with very few (9%) being juvenile offenders or having gotten themselves or another pregnant (7%). And nearly half (48%) of all mentees are judged by their mentor as being "gifted students." However, one in five (21%) have been held back in school.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTION OF TOTAL ADULT SAMPLE

	Total	Have Mentored	Never Mentored
Respondent's sex			
Female	55%	54%	54%
Male	45	46	46
Respondent's age			
18-24 years of age	12%	14%	12%
25-34	21	23	21
35-44	22	25	21
45-54	16	20	14*
55-64	11	9	10
65 and older	16	6	17*
Background			
Hispanic or Latino	8%	8%	8%
White not Hispanic	76	76	76
Black not Hispanic	10	12	9
Other race	2	2	3
Highest grade completed			
Less than high school	16%	10%	17%*
High school	32	27	34*
Some college or technical school	27	30	26
College or more	23	32	20*
Income category			
Less than $10,000	10%	8%	11%
$10,000 to <$15,000	7	6	7
$15,000 to <$25,000	13	13	13
$25,000 to <$35,000	13	15	13
$35,000 to <$50,000	14	16	13
$50,000 to <$75,000	10	16	9*
$75,000 or more	10	13	9

* The never-mentored group differed from the mentored group at a 5 percent level of significance.

Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*, Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998.

"He's a nice man. I don't know many."

TABLE 3
INCIDENCE OF PROBLEMS FOR YOUTH IN MENTORING AND THE IMPACT OF MENTORING

Problem	Youth Has Problem*	Mentor Helped "A Lot"**
Negative feelings about himself/herself	55%	62%
Poor relationships with his/her family members	49	35
Poor grades	42	48
Hanging out with the wrong crowd	41	42
Getting into trouble at school	36	49
Getting into trouble outside of school	29	47
Skipping school	24	52
Smoking, drinking or drug use	22	45
Sexual activity	14	25
Running away from home	14	62
Physical or sexual abuse	10	55
An eating disorder	9	26

* Based on mentor reports.

** Mentors' report. The percentages are based on the "youth has problem" of column 1.

Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*, Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998.

MENTORING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

A large majority of adults who have been mentors to a youth feel they have been instrumental in helping with a life problem for the young person they mentored. Eighty-five percent name at least one problem they believe was reduced by mentoring, and many cite more than one (see Table 3).

- Mentors feel most effective in alleviating the youth's negative feelings about themselves. Sixty-two percent who mentored a youth with such feelings believe they alleviated this problem.
- About half of mentors feel they have had a significant, positive influence in helping the youth address problems with skipping school (52%), poor grades (48%), getting into trouble at school (49%) or out of school (47%), or substance abuse (45%).
- Although mentors were less likely to cite abuse and running away from home as problems for the youth they mentored, most mentors in relationships with young people who had these problems feel that mentoring had a major, positive impact: 61 percent felt they had helped a lot with youth at risk for running away from home, and 55 percent felt they helped those suffering from physical or sexual abuse.
- Mentors felt they were relatively less successful in addressing problems with difficult family relationships or eating disorders. Only a quarter felt they had helped a lot with eating disorders (26%), and about one-third thought they had helped with poor relationships with family members (35%).

SUCCESSFUL MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS: FACTORS THAT IMPROVE SUCCESS

Mentors overall report a positive impact on problems faced by the youth they have mentored. Mentors report high rates of success in preventing problems as well as helping youth deal with existing problems. In analyzing the relationships in which mentors felt most successful, several factors appeared to be important, such as length of relationship and engaging in a wide range of activities.

Mentors in relationships that last at least two years are more likely than are relationships that last less than two years to feel they have a positive influence on the life of the youth. Mentors in relationships that last at least two years, as compared with shorter-term relationships, report being able to help solve or avert problems in all five of the most frequent youth problem areas: negative feelings about themselves (55% vs. 45%); poor relationships with family members (34% vs. 20%); hanging out with the wrong crowd (42% vs. 27%); poor grades (42% vs. 34%); and getting into trouble outside of school (41% vs. 31%). Mentors in very-long-term relationships, those lasting at least five years, do not report being any more effective in dealing with behavioral problems than do relationships lasting two, three or four years.

The survey found that mentors who engaged in a wide range of activities and offered guidance to the young person reported achieving more goals. The survey investigated 15 different activities[2] and found that the leading activities reported by the majority of mentors were teaching social skills (83%), standing up for the youth when in trouble (75%), providing social or cultural experiences (71%), exposing the youth to the mentors' own work (68%), career introductions (62%), and teaching job-related skills (54%). Nearly half say they spend "a lot" of time talking with the young person about personal problems or issues (see Table 7). A third of mentors who engage in at least 12 out of 15 possible activities with the young person believe they are able to have an impact on

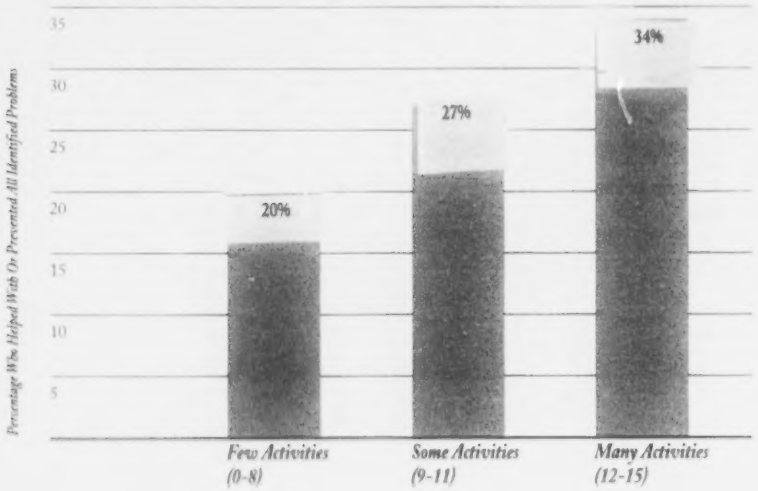
TABLE 4
CHARACTERISTICS OF MENTORED YOUTH

Characteristic	Mentored Youth*	National Statistics**
Female	44%	49%
Male	56	51
Hispanic background	12	12
Race		
White	70	80
Black	16	15
Asian	2	4
Other	12	1
Living Arrangement		
Two-parent families	56	68
One-parent families	30	27
Lives with someone else	11	5
Economic Well-Being		
Well off	8	N/A
Comfortable	46	N/A
Struggling	38	N/A
Desperate	7	N/A

* **Source:** *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*, Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998.

** The Statistical Abstract of the United States, Census Bureau, 1994.

CHART 2
MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS WORK BEST WITH A WIDE VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*, Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998.

each of his or her actual or threatened problems. In contrast, only 20 percent of mentors who engage in relatively few activities (eight or fewer of the 15 investigated) believe they have the same degree of success.

Among mentoring relationships for young people in very difficult life circumstances, older mentors, those who have more frequent telephone contact with their mentee and those that provide networking contacts reported helping the youth more than other types of mentors.[1] Young people living in very difficult circumstances or with severe behavioral problems were generally at risk for multiple problems. In addition to longer mentoring relationships and wider scope of activities, the survey found more reported mentors who are 50 years of age or older, who introduce the youth to other people who can help them, and who spend at least four or more hours per month with them in telephone conversations.

A large majority of adults who have been mentors felt they have helped their mentee with a life problem.

Mentors report that 80 percent of young people in mentoring relationships have one or more problems that put their success in school, health or development at risk.

"I was just thinking of getting a job, that's all. But after hanging around (my mentor) I saw there were other things to do in life."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MENTORING IN AMERICA: FORMAL PROGRAMS AND INFORMAL CONNECTIONS

Given the nationwide interest in expanding mentoring programs, a common image of adults mentoring a child or young person is that of a relationship developed through participation in a formal, structured mentoring program, typically with a nationally recognized program. The survey finds, however, that most mentoring relationships develop through informal contacts between the adult and youth through neighborhood, church or family connections rather than through formal programs.

Approximately eight of 10 (83%) adults who have mentored young people in the last five years had initiated the relationship through informal contacts. Among informal mentors, 19 percent are family-based relationships, and 81 percent are relationships where the mentor and the young person are not related. Although an assumption might be that nonfamilial mentors are likely to be individuals like coaches or others involved in extracurricular activities with youth, only 5 percent of all informal matches began through a sport or other extracurricular activity.

The most common methods of introduction for the informal nonfamilial mentors and the young person was through a friend or the family (37%), through living in the same neighborhood (11%), through the youth's school (11%) or through the mentor's own children (8%). Nearly a quarter (23%) of informal mentoring relationships began because of a traumatic event in the young person's life. Over half of the mentors (56%) stated that they were mainly responsible for starting the mentoring relationship; 16 percent said the youth was mainly responsible for starting the relationship.

Conversely, 17 percent of the adults who have mentored young people in the past five years did so through formal mentoring programs. About a third (33%) of these programs are sponsored by schools, a third (31%) by churches, a sixth (16%) by the government, a tenth

TABLE 5
PERCENTAGE OF MENTORS WHO REPORTED HELPING OR PREVENTING PROBLEMS BY LENGTH OF RELATIONSHIPS

Youth Problem	Up to Two Years	Two or More Years
Negative feeling about self	45%	55%*
Poor grades	34	42*
Hanging out with wrong crowd	27	42*
Trouble out of school	31	41*
Trouble at school	36	38
Smoking, drinking, drug use	27	38*
Difficult relationships in family	20	34*
Skipping school	27	30
Running away from home	20	28*
Sexual activity	19	24
Victim of abuse	14	17
Eating disorder	8	11

* The distributions of the two columns differ at a 5 percent level of significance.

Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*, Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998.

Nearly one-third of adults had been a mentor at some point, 83 percent of them not in formal mentoring programs.

Informal relationships are less structured, include more telephone interaction and more contact with the mentee's parents.

"It's crucial to put mentoring in kid's lives, no matter what the pattern is. We need to find the great people and then find more ways to use them than working with one kid for years and years."

by business and the rest by other types of organizations, such as community and non-profit organizations. Workplaces also appear to be a major route into mentoring. More than one-quarter (27%) of mentors say they were in a program sponsored by their employer. Those in formal mentoring programs cite training and ongoing mechanisms for support to be critical factors in making the mentoring relationship successful.

While formal and informal mentors are similar in many demographic variables, including age, gender and race, formal mentors are significantly more likely than informal mentors to be college educated (39% vs. 30%), more likely to be working (26% vs. 15%) and less likely to live in rural communities (18% vs. 26%). In addition, mentors in formal relationships are more likely than informal mentors to participate in a host of other formal volunteer activities, such as Little League or organized team sports (63% vs. 47%); community recreation programs (55% vs. 41%); and such programs as Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts (56% vs. 47%).

Formal mentors are more likely than informal mentors to influence the lives of more youth by mentoring. Over the past five years, formal mentors are more likely than informal mentors to have mentored five or more young people (59% vs. 33%). Conversely, informal mentors are more likely than formal mentors to have mentored only one young person (19% vs. 9%) or two to four young people (46% vs. 30%).

Although formal mentors have more mentoring relationships, informal mentoring relationships are more likely to start when the youth is younger and to last several years. Informal mentors are more likely to begin mentoring relationships when children are age nine or younger (34% vs. 13%) and are over three times more likely than formal mentors to maintain a mentoring relationship with a young person for five or more years (38% vs. 10%). In contrast, formal mentors are three times more likely than informal mentors to have mentoring relationships that last one year or less (38% vs. 11%).

Formal and informal mentors both report that being understanding and a good listener as well as having commitment are key ingredients for a successful mentor: one in five mentors reports that being understanding and patient (22%) and a good listener (22%) are important. Mentors, whether formal or informal, also show a commitment to the relationship: nearly eight of 10 (77%) never or hardly ever cancel a scheduled meeting with their mentee. Similarly, the young people are committed to the relationship: nearly three-quarters (73%) never or hardly ever cancel their meeting with their mentor (see Table 6).

Regardless of the type of mentoring relationship mentors judge the youth to have fairly similar sets of problems. When mentors were questioned about whether their youth had ever had problems with any of 12 areas,[4] the frequencies of the identified problems were the same, with two exceptions: formal mentors are more likely than informal mentors to report that the young person they mentor got into trouble at school (43% vs. 34%); and informal mentors are more likely than formal mentors to report that the young person had an eating disorder (10% vs. 4%). Youth being mentored in formal and informal relationships also had a similar number of problems as judged by the mentor. However, informal mentors judged their youth as having promise more often than formal mentors, likely because they self-selected the youth with whom they were working: 35 percent of informal mentors compared with 6 percent of formal mentors judged their special youth as "gifted."

CHARACTERISTICS OF MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Although initial contact with youth varied, formal and informal mentoring relationships are strikingly similar. Formal and informal mentors overall spend about the same amount of time with the young person, engage in the same sorts of activities, and provide the same types of guidance and support. Not surprisingly, informal relationships are less structured, relying less on fixed meeting places and times and including

more interaction through telephone conversations, and more time spent just hanging out. Informal mentors also have more contact with the young person's parents.

AMOUNT OF CONTACT

On average, both formal and informal mentors spend about 10 hours each month meeting in person with the mentee. Twenty-eight percent spend less than five hours a month, 23 percent spend six to 10 hours, 24 percent spend 11 to 25 hours, and 24 percent spend more than 25 hours each month. In addition, most mentors (62%) spend time talking on the phone with the young person, with 19 percent spending more than four hours each month in telephone conversations; informal mentors are much more likely to have telephone conversations with the young person (64% vs. 52%). Four percent communicate with the young person using electronic mail.

Informal mentors are less likely than formal mentors to have a regularly scheduled time and place to meet the young person. Seventy-one percent of formal mentors, but only 12 percent of family-based mentors and 23 percent of other informal mentors have a regular meeting place. Most of those with a regular meeting place say the location of meetings works well for them. Forty-five percent rate the location as excellent, and another 47 percent rate it as good. Only 8 percent give a negative rating of either fair or poor.

Formal and informal relationships differ greatly, however, in the amount of contact the mentor has with other adults in the young person's life. Informal mentors have more contact with the young person's parents or guardian than do formal mentors. Only 30 percent of formal mentors say they have conversations with a parent or guardian "a lot," and 36 percent of formal mentors say these conversations happen rarely or never. In contrast, 82 percent of family-based informal mentors and 50 percent of other informal mentors say conversations with parents happen "a lot." Only 16 percent of all informal mentors say these conversations happen rarely or never.

On the other hand, formal mentors have somewhat more contact with the young person's teachers than do informal mentors. Fifty-two percent of informal mentors, but only 43 percent of formal mentors, say they have no contact at all with the young person's teachers. Twenty-nine percent of formal mentors say they have conversations with teachers "a lot," as opposed to only 11 percent of informal mentors.

"My mentor calls me a lot to do things, go places and see things. I've met so many people. It helped me to learn to talk, that is, not to talk too much."

ACTIVITIES

Mentors engage in a wide variety of activities with the young people they mentor. Although formal and informal mentors did not differ significantly in terms of the frequency of engaging in activities with their mentees, informal mentors are involved in a wider variety of activities overall.

Spending time talking about the young person's personal issues or problems was the most common activity among those investigated in this category. About half of mentors overall (49%) say this is something they do a lot with the young person. Only 4 percent say they never do this together. Among formal mentors, those who received training are more likely than those who did not receive training to spend a lot of time talking with the young person about his or her personal problems (52% vs. 32%).

About half of mentors (47%) also say they spend a lot of time just hanging out with the young person, although this is more common among informal than formal mentoring relationships (49% vs. 38%). Family-based informal mentors are the most likely to say they frequently spend time just hanging out with the young person (61%). Only 8 percent of mentors overall say they never spend time just hanging out with the young person.

Over a third of mentors (36%) frequently eat meals with the young person, while 8 percent never do this. Family-based informal mentors eat meals with the young person more than do other mentors (51% vs. 34%).

About three in 10 (29%) spend a lot of time working on academics or homework, while a

TABLE 6
DESCRIPTION OF MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

	Total	Formal	Informal
Hours per month spent face to face			
5 or less	28%	28%	28%
6 to 15	33	37	32
16 or more	38	34	39
Median	10 hrs.	>10	<10
Hours per month spent on telephone			
None	36%	47%	34%*
Up to 4	43	39	44
More than 4	19	13	20*
Meeting time			
Regularly scheduled	30%	71%	21%*
Place			
Regular place	64%	79%	61%*
Where spend time			
School/church/ community center/library	19%	49%	12%*
Home (mentor's or youth's)	34	14	38*
Business/organization facility	4	8	3*
Mentor cancels			
A lot/sometimes	17%	13%	17%
Hardly ever/never	77	81	76
Mentee cancels			
A lot/sometimes	21%	21%	21%
Hardly ever/never	73	73	72
Parents			
Knew parents at beginning	73%	40%	80%*
Came to know parents	16	37	12*
Did not know or come to know parents	11	23	8*

* The formal and informal relationships differ on this characteristic at a 5 percent level of significance.

Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*, Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998.

fifth (21%) never work together on academic pursuits. Formal mentors are more likely than informal mentors to say academic work is something they do a lot, but the two types of mentors are equally likely to say they never engage in this type of activity.

About a quarter of mentors (27%) frequently engage in physical activities with the young person such as sports, walks or hikes. A fifth (19%) never engage in this type of activity with the young person. Although a quarter (24%) also frequently discuss or investigate college or career opportunities together, about the same number never talk about college or careers. Seventeen percent of mentors frequently take the young person to special places or events, such as a library, museum, concert, play, movie or sporting event. A fifth (20%) never do these kinds of activities together.

Although only 8 percent of mentors say they frequently participate in a job internship or job-shadowing program with the young person they mentor, a total of 38 percent of mentors do this type of activity at least occasionally. Six in 10 (59%) never participate in these kinds of job programs.

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

Mentors who provide guidance and support reported helping their mentee more than other mentors. Formal and informal mentors are quite similar in the types of guidance and support they offer to the young person, although there are a few statistically significant differences in the support they provide in their relationships. For the most part, as with differences in activities pursued, these differences are a matter of degree more than a real differentiation of the two types of mentoring relationships, with informal mentors doing a wider variety of these activities overall than formal mentors. A third of informal mentors (32%), but only a quarter of formal mentors, offer at least six of the seven types of guidance and support investigated.

Most mentors teach social skills or manners as part of their relationship with the young person (83%), stand up for the young person

TABLE 7
MENTORING ACTIVITIES WITH YOUTH BY TYPE OF MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

	Total	Formal	Informal
	Percentage of Mentors Who Spent a Lot or Some Time in Activities		
Social and Life Skills			
Working on academics or homework	64%	68%	63%
Talking about or investigating college or career opportunities	62	57	63
Going to a library, museum, concert, play, movie or sporting event	61	56	61
Participating in a sport together or going for a walk or hike	65	61	65
Talking about the youth's personal issues or problems	89	87	90
Eating meals together	79	69	81*
Just hanging out	81	72	83*
Participating in a job internship or shadowing program	22	24	21
	Percentage Who Engaged in Activity		
Guidance and Networking			
Provide cultural, social or entertainment opportunities that wouldn't normally be available to the youth	71%	66%	72%
Teach social skills or manners	83	80	84
Teach job-related or work skills	54	53	54
Introduce the youth to other people who could help him/her reach his/her academic or career goals	62	64	62
Expose the youth to your own work	68	66	68
Stand up for the youth when he/she is in trouble	75	59	78*
Help the youth get a job or serve as a job reference	34	27	36*
Summary Measure			
Lower activity level: 0-8	31	40	29*
Mid range of activities: 9-11	42	37	43
Wide range of activities: 12-15	27	24	27

* Informal and formal relationships differed on this characteristic at a 5 percent level of significance.

Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*, Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998.

Mentors in formal programs are more likely than are informal mentors to influence the lives of multiple youth.

when he or she gets in trouble (74%); provide cultural, social or entertainment activities that normally would not be available to him or her (71%); and expose the young person to the mentor's own work (68%). Informal mentors are much more likely to say they stand up for the young person when he or she gets in trouble (78% vs. 59%). Formal mentors who received training are more likely than are formal mentors who received no training to teach social skills (85% vs. 66%).

Most mentors say they introduce the young person to other people who could help him or her reach career or academic goals (62%). Just over half say they teach specific job-related skills to the young person (54%). About a third (34%) help the young person get a job or serve as a job reference. Informal mentors who are not related to the young person are more likely than are all other mentors to help with finding a job (38% vs. 26%). Formal mentors who received training are more likely than are formal mentors who received no training to both introduce the youth to potentially important contacts (67% vs. 54%) and to teach job-related skills (58% vs. 38%).

"...we even talk about political and social issue stuff."

Mentors who are part of the youth's family are slightly different from other informal mentors in a number of respects. Family-based informal mentors more often say they teach social skills (92% vs. 82%), stand up for the young person (88% vs. 76%) and provide opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable (80% vs. 70%).

The duration of the mentoring relationship has a small effect on the types of activities that are a frequent part of the relationship but a bigger effect on the nature of guidance and support the mentor offers. Four activities become more frequent over time: eating meals together; playing sports or other outdoor activities; discussing colleges or careers; and going to special places and events. All of the types of guidance and support investigated in this study become more common as the relationship endures over time.

MENTORING IS A SATISFYING AND REWARDING EXPERIENCE

Both formal and informal mentoring requires a commitment of time and a willingness by mentors to volunteer with youth other than their own children. Most adults who have mentored in recent years find the commitment is worthwhile. Adults are motivated to mentor because they believe the young person needs help (43%), they want to do good for others (27%), and they want to work with young people (17%). Mentors also personally value their experience as mentors, stating that they are very satisfied with the experience and personally learned something through mentoring. The majority say they would do it again and would recommend mentoring to a friend.

Mentors find mentoring a very satisfying experience, with nearly three-quarters (73%) saying their experience has been very positive and nearly all saying the experience was somewhat or very positive (97%). Similarly high percentages of positive and very positive ratings prevailed regardless of the length of time of the relationship, original impetus to mentor or type of mentoring program.

Most mentors (83%) learned or gained something personally from their mentoring experiences, including feeling that they were a better person, increased patience, friendship, a feeling of effectiveness and new skills (such as listening and working with people). When mentors were asked what they liked best about being a mentor, virtually all could name a positive aspect of the experience.

Less than half (46%) of mentors could mention something they disliked about mentoring. When probed about problems that arose in the relationship, nearly half said the time commitment and peer pressure on the youth were somewhat of a problem. However, only a minority (12% for time and 17% for peer pressure) thought either were big problems.

The survey found that mentors would mentor again and recommend mentoring to a friend. Most mentors said they are very likely to mentor again (54%), and more than four of five would be somewhat or very likely to mentor again (84%). Nearly all mentors (91%) stated that they are likely to recommend mentoring to a friend, with the majority stating this is very likely (59%).

TABLE 8
MENTORING VIEWED AS A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

	Total %	Very %	Somewhat %
Positive experience	97	73	24
Likely to mentor again	84	54	30
Likely to recommend to a friend	91	59	32

Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*, Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Mentors report that they believe mentoring works and that they have helped young people a lot with their personal or school-related problems. Whether in formal, structured mentoring programs or in relationships formed through informal family, church or neighborhood connections, the large majority of mentors believe they helped solve at least one or more problems. Mentors find the relationship with youth highly satisfying and rewarding and say they would do it again.

Mentoring ranks high among adult volunteer activities with children and youth. Nearly one of three adults interviewed has served as a mentor during his or her lifetime, and this rate rivals other prevalent volunteer activities with youth, such as sports teams and scouting. One of seven adults is currently involved in a mentoring relationship. These aforementioned mentors

Many adults who mentor also volunteer in other community activities with youth, suggesting a recruitment strategy that taps such activities.

are likely to be younger, college-educated and have a higher income than are adults who do not mentor. They were also more likely to have had a mentor themselves growing up.

Mentoring is reaching youth who are likely to face multiple problems in school and at home and who have little confidence in themselves. These young people often grow up in difficult circumstances, with families struggling financially or with parents who are unavailable or unable to provide needed support, or both. Mentors believe they have been particularly successful in helping youth overcome such problems as having negative feelings about themselves, skipping school and poor grades.

Certain factors improve the mentor-reported success of mentoring relationships. Relationships that last at least two years are more likely to have a positive influence on the youth and help solve or avert problems. In addition, relationships where the mentor engages in a wide range of activities and offers guidance to the young person are more successful.

Most mentoring relationships are formed informally. Informal mentors are most often not related to the young person, but become connected with the youth most often through either a friend or family. Still, a wide variety of groups such as schools, universities, churches and employers, are sponsoring formal programs. The youth participating in both formal and informal relationships appear to have similar problems, such as problems at school or risky behaviors. More youth in informal programs, however, are identified by their mentors as having promise. Formal and informal mentors spend about the same amount of time with the young person, engage in the same sorts of activities, and provide the same types of guidance and support.

At a time when this nation is searching for ways to reach out to youth, the survey findings indicate that mentoring is reaching youth at risk. Moreover, mentors value their experiences mentoring young people. And these findings based on mentor reports confirm and support studies of mentoring programs that find mentoring makes a positive difference for youth at risk.[5] The challenge lies in expanding programs to reach a greater portion of youth at risk and to recruit new mentors.

Efforts are under way in cities across the nation to expand the number of adults willing to volunteer as mentors. The survey findings suggest strategies for recruiting future generations of mentors. For instance, many adults who mentor also volunteer in other community activities with youth. Thus, a good recruitment strategy could be to reach out to adults who volunteer in such community activities as Sunday schools, organized sports such as Little League, scouting groups and academic tutoring programs. Employers also appear to be a major route into formal mentoring programs for their employees. Thus, increasing the rate of employer-sponsored mentoring programs appears to be a promising recruitment strategy. Including local employers in mentoring expansion efforts is likely to be important since most mentoring occurs at the community level.

It is also relevant that a great deal of mentoring is occurring outside of formal programs—and traditional recruitment strategies would probably be less effective with this group. An outreach campaign would be beneficial for encouraging new informal mentors to forge relationships with youth in their communities and could also serve to educate those informal mentors already involved in relationships. The approximately 80 percent of mentoring relationships that are informal do not currently have ongoing or structured support; therefore, guidance and knowledge regarding the factors that promote successful relationships would be beneficial. For instance, information on the amount of contact with a young person and type of activities that are most likely to lead to a successful relationship would be useful.

Current and former mentors are a recruitment resource for future mentors. Mentors state they would be likely to mentor again and to recommend mentoring to a friend. Given the high

rate of satisfaction with both formal and informal mentoring relationships, mentors are also important ambassadors for mentoring.

Information about the mentors themselves also provides a valuable indicator of how best to locate additional adults for mentoring: mentors are more likely to be college-educated, to have higher annual incomes and to have had a mentor when they were a child.

Promotional efforts could emphasize the fact that adult mentors can make a difference in the lives of young people. Based on survey findings about mentor motivation, the expectation of being able to help is likely to appeal to future mentors. Adults who mentor say they are motivated to do so because they believe they can make a difference and help the young person.

The voices of the mentors in this survey provide valuable information to pivotal sectors of society—policymakers, mentoring program sponsors, volunteer organizations, employers and the public—about the value of mentoring. Expanding mentoring and building on features that make it more successful will require the concerted effort of all adults interested in helping young people become productive adults.

Mentors personally value their experience, say they learned something through mentoring, would do it again and would recommend mentoring to a friend.

NOTES

We thank Catherine DesRoches and Tammi Troy for assisting in the preparation of the manuscript.

1 Problems included poor grades, getting into trouble at school, risky behaviors (smoking, drinking, drug use), negative feelings about self, poor relationships with family members, skipping school, getting into trouble outside of school, hanging out with the wrong crowd, eating disorders, physical or sexual abuse, sexual activity, and running away from home.

2 These activities included working on academics, talking about college activities, going to a cultural or sports event, doing a physical activity together, talking about the youth's personal issues, eating together, hanging out, participating in job internships, providing cultural or social opportunities, teaching social skills or manners, teaching work skills, networking, exposing to own work, standing up for youth in trouble, and helping get a job. To analyze the impact of different factors contributing to greater success, a composite measure of the 12 problems and mentors' beliefs about their effectiveness was created. This composite ranged from 0 percent to 100 percent, where 0 percent indicates that the mentor neither helped nor prevented any problem for the youth, and 100 percent indicates that the mentor believed he or she helped "a lot" or prevented all problems confronting the youth.

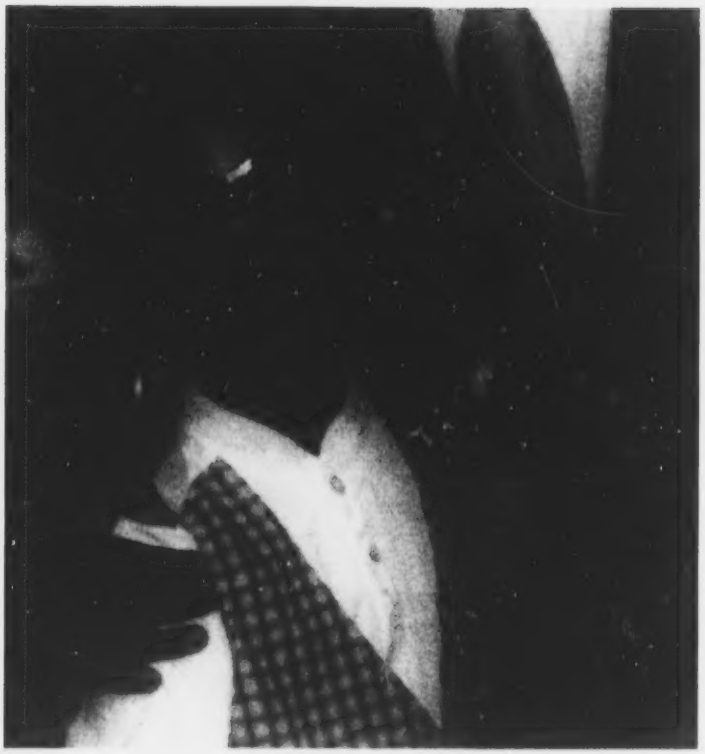
3 In the analysis, youth classified in particularly difficult circumstances were those having a parent with serious emotional, legal or substance abuse problems; living in a family in a desperate financial situation; not living with a biological or adoptive parent; being physically or sexually abused; or being a juvenile offender. These conclusions are based on regressions that include the characteristics of youth, age of mentor and other characteristics of the relationship.

4 See Footnote #1 for list of problems.

5 For example, see Joseph P. Tierney and Jean Baldwin Grossman, *Making a Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters*, Public/Private Ventures, November 1995.

MENTORING IN 1998: FOUR MODELS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Natalie Jaffe



The past decade has been one of growth and broadening horizons for the youth mentoring field as well as for the thousands of young people it serves. Existing programs have expanded, new programs have been established, and the ancestor of them all (Big Brothers Big Sisters) is continually exploring and instituting new approaches.

The four program models described here are thriving representatives of youth mentoring: three programs (10,000 Mentors, the Hospital Youth Mentoring Program and Sponsor-A-Scholar) with instrumental goals—doing better in school, exploring careers and getting into college; and the fourth, Big Brothers Big Sisters, whose pairs of adults and youngsters aim to establish and maintain friendships that lead to the development of competent, confident, caring young persons. Listening to the young people, one hears that, no matter what the program's goals are, the primary benefit from their point of view is a wider sense of life's possibilities and an increase in self-confidence. These new found characteristics come from having a respected and knowledgeable older friend who sends the constant message, "Yes, you can." Beyond pursuing the specific aims of each program, the young people become more aware of the larger world, of their own capacities and proclivities.

The programs also have major common issues to confront: maintenance or expansion of their programs, funding, recruitment of volunteers and a system for continuing assessment of results, so vital to success in attracting money and mentors.

In June 1998, 10,000 Mentors completed its second school year of operation in partnership with the Newark, New Jersey public school system. The system funds about half the program's current $350,000 cost, chooses participating elementary schools from the city's most disadvantaged neighborhoods, and provides on-site program coordinators with access to teachers, administrators and guidance counselors.' Additional funding is provided by foundations and many local businesses and public agencies. Three schools with about a hundred matches each have been participating since Fall 1996 and three more, each with an initial 30 matches, were added in Spring 1998. About 500 pairs were active by the end of the 1997-1998 academic year. The children are recommended by their teachers and counselors; parents are invited to apply. Adult mentors meet with their mentees for a least four hours a month for one year. The first three meetings are held in groups at school while the mentors' references are being checked, after which the pairs commonly meet on weekends and after school. The program has specific goals: to improve academic performance, increase respect for self and others, and develop a positive work ethic; and to convince a sufficient number of local businesses to provide mentors so that all 10,000 of Newark's elementary school children may benefit.

The Hospital Youth Mentoring Program, which aims to use mentoring to promote career development, was initially a $2.7 million, four-year pilot operated by The Johns Hopkins Hospital for The Commonwealth Fund. At the end of the pilot, 15 hospitals that were paired with nearby high schools and middle schools continued the project with their own funds. Thirteen used additional grants from Commonwealth to expand career development and to market the program to other institutions in their areas. The basic model, which is adjusted to meet the needs of each hospital-school collaboration, includes participation by a minimum of 50 students throughout their high school years, starting in the ninth or tenth grade; student selection criteria that include being at risk economically, earning at least a C average and showing interest in the program; weekly visits to the hospital—two a month to meet with the mentor and two a month to learn about the hospital and engage in career development activities; designated staff in the hospital and school responsible for administration; and documentation of the program's experiences. A total of 850 youth participated in the pilot and more than 700 were involved in 1997-1998.

Sponsor-A-Scholar, a project of Philadelphia Futures, provides well-motivated C students from poorly performing high schools with five years of mentoring, academic support, assistance with choosing and applying to colleges, financial incentives to do so, and continued contact throughout the postsecondary years. Since its founding in 1990, with support from The Commonwealth Fund, the program has served 450 students, 186 of whom have graduated from high school and gone on to higher education. The first eight postsecondary school students graduated in June 1998. The program's annual budget is about $500,000, primarily in foundation grants; $6,000 to cover college-related expenses is provided by individuals and corporations for each of the students in the program. About half of the individual sponsors are also mentors, with the rest recruited from the donor organizations and other sources. Mentors and students are paired in the beginning of ninth grade and meet at least monthly through high school. Once in college, the contact is primarily by telephone and e-mail, with meetings during breaks. The high school students are also provided with tutoring in the subjects that give them trouble; workshops on study skills, writing, personal development and college prep; and career exploration; visits to colleges and help with college applications and requests for financial aid; and access to help in problem solving through their postsecondary careers.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBS), the century-old prototype of one-to-one mentoring, was sustaining 100,500 traditional matches and 25,000 other types of mentoring relationships in 1997, and had 35,000 youth on waiting lists. The BBBS network includes 507 agencies with annual budgets ranging from $50,000 to $3 million covering caseloads of 30 to 1,500 matches at an annual cost of about $1,000 per match. The budget of the national office, which sets and monitors the program's detailed standards, is $6 million. Big Brothers and Big Sisters, who are thoroughly screened, have traditionally been required to meet with their "Littles" for three to five hours a week for one year, although, as will be detailed in the final section of this chapter, the program is innovating rapidly in this respect and others as well. The Littles are 6- to 16-year-olds from single-parent families who, with their parent, have expressed the desire for a mentor of a certain age, race, gender and interests. The program's goal for the matches is creation and maintenance of a friendship without specific outcomes beyond positive youth development. Agency staff monitor the relationships on a regular basis.

10,000 MENTORS: SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING IN NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

Sitting on a bench outside of the 10,000 Mentors office at the Belmont Runyon Elementary School in a blasted Newark neighborhood last March was about as unlikely a match as one who has been looking at mentoring programs for more than 10 years has ever seen. The pair had been together for eight months: Yussuf, a 13-year-old special education student, 210 pounds, over six feet tall, blacker than his black puffed jacket and knit cap; and Jim Caulkins, a spare, 70-plus, retired small manufacturer with white hair and horn-rimmed glasses wearing a Lands End-type outfit. There they sat, waiting for somebody to open the room where the computer Jim got for Yussuf resides, bickering, bantering, complimenting and interrupting each other, finishing each other's sentences like an old married couple. "I need to get him reading," declared Jim. "He's my best friend," said Yussuf with a loving look.

Like most pairs in the program, which involves about one-fourth of the student body, they meet twice a month for two to four hours, sometimes on a weekend or evening, sometimes at school after classes. Yussuf said, "He helps me read," and Jim put in, "When he can read and do math, he can take the computer home. His teacher says he's improving!"

Yussuf leaned forward: "We went maple sugaring—I tasted real syrup! We went to Jockey Hollow, the museum, the library." Jim: "A City Council meeting, city hall, the traffic court." Yussuf: "And the criminal court, and parks I never saw before." Jim: "An arboretum."

Jim: "I got him a library card. Now he goes alone. He saw a TV program about the English kings and got interested." Yussuf launched into a listing, with some details, of the seventeenth century English kings. Jim: "Can you beat that!"

As the two went off down the hall, still chatting, they passed a room where Ivory Wise, a registered nurse at a residential center for adjudicated youth, meets for an hour after school every Wednesday with 12-year-old Leon, the meeting pattern for a few of the 10,000 Mentors matches. Over their Monopoly game, Ivory explained: "I have five daughters, grew up in the Newark projects. Even though we meet only at school and for an hour a week, Leon knows I care about him." Leon: "He's a nice man. I don't know many." Ivory continued: "We do math, reading, writing, play games. I hope I won't see him in my program." Leon, who Ivory said is usually mute, murmured: "If he couldn't come, I'd feel bad."

Back at the 10,000 Mentors office, the school-based coordinator, Deanna Morris, explained her role: formally, to match the mentor and child on the basis of interests and hobbies; to establish relationships with the mentor, child, parent and school personnel; and to monitor the match and to help recruit mentors. During our conversation, children in the program were

in and out of her office keeping in touch, asking to be walked home, using her computer—all in a take-it-for-granted atmosphere of mutual trust. Morris keeps in touch with teachers and counselors to stay informed about how the kids are doing in school. She has access to their records, too, and can inform teachers about problems identified by the mentors. She speaks to each mentor at least once a month to monitor the progress of the match and to distribute lists of resources for help and activities.

Morris said the program was hosted enthusiastically by the teachers and the principal, who made hard-to-find space and equipment available for the program office. For students and their parents, participating has become "the thing to do," she said.

This year is the second full school year of 10,000 Mentors' operation. By the end of April, three new schools had been added to the three operating since Fall 1996, for a total of six schools and about 500 matches. According to Vesta Godwin, executive director of 10,000 Mentors, each school operates similarly and hosts from 30 to 120 matches at a cost of $662 per match.

The schools are those with high rates of single-parent homes, addiction and abuse, chosen by the Newark Public Schools—which provided half ($179,000) of the program's funding in 1997-1998. The children matched by the coordinator have been recommended by teachers and counselors, who then suggest to parents that they apply.

In addition to the schools, 10,000 Mentors' other major funders are the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, MCJ Foundation (in the first year) and the Charles Hayden Foundation. Other donors include HasbroToys, The Annenberg Foundation and a variety of corporate donors.

Mentors are recruited from corporations, hospitals, public agencies, churches, grassroots organizations, fraternities and masonic organizations, colleges and recommendations by other mentors. Current sources of mentors include Drew University, Bell Atlantic, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Public Service Electric and Gas, the New Jersey Nets, the Newark Police Department, the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Beneficial Life Insurance, Blue Cross Blue Shield, two law firms and several fraternities.

Nearly 40 percent of the mentors are male and Godwin said many more are needed since the program makes only same-sex matches. Eighty percent of the male mentors are African American; half the women are African American and other minorities. Godwin said: "The kids don't seem to care about the mentor's race. What they want is attention and

love. We find that age doesn't matter either. We have successful mentors that range from college students to senior citizens."

The mentor screening process comprises an application, a one-hour interview, the submission of four references, a criminal history background check, and a three-hour training session supplemented by quarterly information and discussion sessions. Once matched, the mentors and children meet in groups three times in the school building after classes; then, when the mentor's references have been checked, they begin meeting one to one and may leave the school building to do so.

Although the basic requirements for meetings are at school, four hours a month for one year, Godwin said that few of the mentors limit themselves to that schedule. Most, she said, meet both at school and on weekends twice a month and spend most of the day together. Mentors ask parents' permission to take a child on jaunts and let them know if the child will be late in coming home from school. The program distributes a monthly schedule of activities mentors and youth can do together. In March, these included children's programs at the public library, such as Women's History Month, Sensational Poets and the Magical Rain Forest; free tickets to a Nets game paid for by corporate sponsors; a play, *Young Thomas Edison*, at the Newark Museum; and *The Velveteen Rabbit* at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. And, like Jim Caulkins and Yussuf, many have ideas of their own.

Godwin said that only about 5 percent of matches do not survive the first three (group) meetings. Most lasted through the first year and nearly half went on to the second year. Some mentors, she said, are following their students to middle school on their own initiative.

10,000 Mentors is the creation of Saul Cooperman, former teacher, principal, superintendent, New Jersey Commissioner of Education, and now president of the board of 10,000 Mentors and Educate America, a nonprofit institute devoted to improving public education nationally. He also served for six years as CEO of the REDDY Foundation, which provides academic assistance to inner-city Newark youth. Cooperman explained:

"I made the case to the Newark schools that what goes on in the schools is a major influence on kids' lives, so the schools should pay for the mentors. And from the mentoring point of view, how better to reach most kids? To find out how they're doing in school, whether they've had their inoculations, what's bothering them? In this program, we're where the kids are, we know the teachers and counselors, we see the records. And schools cover every inch of this country—they're a great base for a mentoring program."

As for meeting the goal stated in the program's name, Mr. Cooperman defined it as "optimistic rather than realistic." In the schools, he said, the demand is huge. "We're seen as a helpful organization—the teachers and principals love us, and the kids and parents are clamoring to get in."

"Mentors? We'll definitely have 2,000, but 10,000? That's more a hope than an expectation. It will happen only if major corporations get involved, make huge commitments and give flex time for employees to mentor these kids."

To support the campaign for mentors, Cooperman said, much more needs to be known about the results of 10,000 Mentors. "Does it make a difference in the lives of kids who come from dysfunctional families and neighborhoods? How many mentors stay with the kids; do the kids have fewer pregnancies, higher grades, better school attendance? Right now, all we can say is our people are of good heart, bright, assertive and work hard. But nothing is a success just if you work hard. People have to see results before they'll give their time to mentoring."

THE HOSPITAL YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAM: CAREER EXPLORATION

"Once kids get to high school, the major influences in their lives increasingly become their peers. Parents and schools begin to lose them, and more than mentoring's 'caring adult' is needed to help the kids learn to help themselves; they must see the connection between education and the future. Mentoring and career development—you can't do one without the other."

"Even more important than your skills is learning how to...get along with your coworkers. (My mentor) helped me with that, too."

That, according to Deborah Knight-Kerr of The Johns Hopkins Hospital, was the motivating force behind creation in 1993 of the Hospital Youth Mentoring Program, financed by The Commonwealth Fund and administered by Johns Hopkins.

During the project's $2.7 million, four-year pilot, 830 students in 15 schools paired with nearby hospitals. One afternoon a week for two to four years children between the ninth and twelfth grades meet with a mentor at one of the hospitals, observing the work of all the hospital's departments, spending several months working in one of the departments, and participating in various career development and social activities. The pilot's requirement was for 50 pairs in each program. Most surpassed that goal; others met it but had dropouts and finished with 30 to 35 pairs.

The pilot ended in August 1997, and the schools and hospitals have since testified to their satisfaction with the model: all 15, including hospitals that are downsizing or merging, continued operating the program after the end of the demonstration period. Thirteen are operating with additional Commonwealth Fund support ($30,000 each) to expand the career exploration component of the model and to help market the program to other schools and hospitals. The 13 hospitals have institutionalized the program, Knight-Kerr said, covering costs ranging from $80,000 to $200,000 each year.

From the point of view of one hospital administrator—Janet Mackin, corporate director of the Training and Development Department of Beth Israel Medical Center in New York City—"the program has many benefits for us: Our employees can reflect on their job experience when discussing it with the kids and see the bigger picture. It shows them what they can contribute to society. For the hospital, it demonstrates our commitment to society and helps us create the next generation of caregivers." Although it is a struggle to keep the program going at a time of great pressures in hospital management, she said, "It would be even riskier not to continue. We would lose a lot."

AnnMarie Barash, the assistant principal at New York's High School of Health Care Professions and Human Services, concurs. Since the end of the pilot project and the recent merger of Beth Israel with St. Luke's/Roosevelt Hospital, Beth Israel has lost the original program management team and has been giving less attention to managing the 66 matches between her students and hospital personnel. "In the beginning, I would have given this program an A++," she said. "Now it gets a B. But there are so many benefits, I wouldn't want to give it up." First, the students see what really goes on in a hospital, a type of exposure otherwise not available in an academic high school. But even more important, Barash said, "They learn to relate to adults outside their families, someone to discuss their goals with, to explore the problems and benefits of their ideas. Most of the kids in the program are very tied to their mentors, and I define this relationship as the most significant force in a student's life. They meet when the kid is 14, *the* crucial age, and the mentors give the kids a real vision for the future." Interviews with students from the high school confirm this verdict.

Maria, an eleventh grader interested in pediatrics, said, "I ask myself do I actually want to go into medicine? This way I can see what pediatrics is really like. I don't know how I'll feel in the end, but it makes a big difference to have someone in the profession who can relate to your problems and issues. And the other parts of the program really expand your options base."

Annabelle, now a senior and choosing among the five colleges that accepted her, is also still examining her options: "Even before getting into the program, I volunteered in the emergency room and met the wonderful woman who later became my mentor. She gave me the confidence to be flexible. After a visit to the morgue, I wanted to be a medical examiner. But now I've gotten interested in business—something creative." Her mentor, Amy, said, "This program helped Annabelle focus on what she doesn't want to do. It's a process, not a push toward health care. But as hospitals get more into management, there will be creative opportunities available." Annabelle: "Even more important than your skills is learning how to develop relationships, to get along with your co-workers. Amy helped me with that, too."

In contrast, Sheres, writing in her class's 1997 program newsletter about her internship in the neonatal intensive care unit, declared, "This is one of the best experiences I've ever had, and it has encouraged me even further to fulfill my goal in becoming a pediatrician." And Hertlice wrote, "Thanks to my mentor, I have realized that working in a medical field is the best thing anyone can do for the world."

Beth Israel started its program with 30 tenth-grade students in 1993-1994 and added another 30 in each of the next two years. Because of the difficulty of finding mentors, no new students were accepted in the fourth year, but 18 were added in 1998 (68 had applied). A total of 66 are currently participating. They meet twice a month with their mentors, and twice a month they tour the hospital and engage in career development activities.

Monwara Khanam, assistant coordinator of the program at Beth Israel, explained that the opportunity is introduced to each class at a June assembly. Applications may be filed by the end of September. "The students must have grades above 70, most are earning between 80 and 90. They have to show commitment to the program, be active in extracurricular activities, be interested in health care and have recommendations from their teachers. We look for students who work hard," she said.

The Beth Israel mentors, Khanam said, are mostly administrative personnel. "We have a few nurses, a couple of residents, several lab technicians, but very few doctors. Mentors are so hard to find—we're five short now—we'll take anyone who's willing."

The students first tour hospital departments, in rotation, in teams of four and are required to complete a check list answering 10 questions about each department visited. They are shown the duties of each job title; learn the roles played by each member of the department; view the equipment, registration process and treatment plans; and are allowed to ask questions as they go. In the second and third years, they "intern" in a hospital department and, in the final year, do career preparation and produce a newsletter summarizing what they have learned from their mentors and exposure to hospital activities.

The national program's first graduating class was in June 1997. An alumni survey conducted by Johns Hopkins (to which 40% of the 404 alumni had responded by late June 1998) found that 96 percent were attending college either full or part time, 90 percent judged the program a "positive experience," 62 percent were still in touch with their mentors, and 90 percent said they would be available to talk to current high school students about their experience with the program.

The Hospital Youth Mentoring Program model is flexible. According to Knight-Kerr, each of the 15 programs is differently organized. But all share the following elements:

- A mentoring relationship between a student and a hospital staff member, who meet at the hospital or elsewhere twice a month in person and twice a month on the phone, preferably from ninth or tenth grade through graduation, though three programs started in middle school;
- Social, athletic and career exploration activities at the hospital;
- Career development activities, such as career days, college or employment guidance, paid

"It's not cool to be a good student in high school, (so) what this program does is create a positive peer group for these kids."

work experience, organized career exploration, job shadowing, speakers and tours of the hospital;

- Administration by a designated person at the school (who does student recruitment, monitors attendance at meetings and activities, and surveys participants and interactions with the hospital) and at the hospital (who recruits mentors, schedules hospital tours for the students, monitors participation and makes facilities available);
- Selection criteria for students that include being at risk economically and for dropping out, maintaining a C average, completing an application and completing an interview in which the student indicates interest in the program; and
- Completion by the hospital of two reports a year documenting the program's experiences, and cooperation with the program evaluator.

Variations among the 15 programs include the grades chosen for participation; the type of linkage established with the school and the type of school involved; the emphasis given to career exploration; the availability of paid school year and summer work experience, covered by federal youth employment and juvenile mentoring funds; a policy of hiring students who do not go on to college and a pledge to hire college graduates who were in the program; and great flexibility in administrative arrangements. The detailed 52-page *Practical Guide for Hospitals to Creating a Successful Youth Mentoring Program* has been published along with shorter guides to establishing the school-hospital partnership, setting up the career exploration component, implementing an assessment process for all the participants, and incorporating opportunities for jobs and internships. These publications and a video will be used by Johns Hopkins and the participating programs to market the model to additional hospitals and schools after the annual meeting of the program network.

Participating hospitals and schools are in Philadelphia (2); New York City (3); Rochester, New York; St. Louis, Missouri; Los Angeles; Durham; Des Moines; Portland, Maine; Cleveland; Ann Arbor; Nashville and Washington, D.C.

SPONSOR-A-SCHOLAR: FROM SCHOOL TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Isaiah was kicked out of the ninth grade for having been absent 55 days. He had never told anyone that his absences were caused by religious observances required by his father and a serious case of asthma. But his mentors, a husband and wife team, found out, informed the school, made arrangements for him to return, and, according to Isaiah, "helped me see what I wanted to do with my life." They have been meeting regularly since 1993. Isaiah graduated third in his class in 1996, received one of the Mayor's Scholarships to the University of Pennsylvania where he earned a 3.5 average his freshman year, and is now a peer mentor at the university and is planning to be a computer engineer.

Isaiah is one of the 186 high school graduates who have been enabled by Philadelphia Futures' Sponsor-A-Scholar program to transcend the chaos and low academic standards of many schools in Philadelphia's poorest neighborhoods, learn about the possibilities life offers and go on to higher education in institutions all over the country. The program, found-

ed and run until 1997 by Marciene Mattleman, and funded initially by The Commonwealth Fund, is now eight years old, serving about 450 youth from ninth grade through a student's postsecondary career. In June 1998 the program celebrated its first eight postsecondary school graduates.

Debra Kahn, the current director, said, "We'll continue to take on new ninth-grade classes every year as long as we get funding and mentors." Administrative and program expenses are about $500,000 a year, covered primarily by foundations and businesses.

She and her colleagues—class coordinators, each shepherding 35 matches in one class through the students' high school careers—described the program to a visitor to Philadelphia Futures' poster-filled offices in March 1998.

> These are kids from schools with no college-going tradition and few facilities for academic development—no labs, for example. Besides, it's not cool to be a good student in high school. What this program does is create a positive peer group for these kids, one they would not otherwise have. We look for kids from the lowest performing schools and with insufficient support at home—the B and C students who can do better. So we ask school counselors to nominate, at the end of the eighth grade, students who have interest in and the capacity to do college work, but are not working up to speed.

The students have to meet income and attendance standards, be earning at least a C average and have the ability to travel regularly to the office in center city Philadelphia. At a personal interview, the students and parents are asked about their interest and willingness to cooperate, why they want a mentor and why they want to go to college. "Students must show the capacity to communicate," Kahn said.

Once admitted to the program, the students are matched with a mentor—an individual or a married couple—with whom they meet at least once a month (typically more frequently) throughout the four years of high school and speak with on the phone more often and during the first year of college.

About one-third of the mentors are also "sponsors," contributing $6,000 for such college-related expenses as transportation, books, blankets, a heavy coat and a computer. Other sponsors are businesses, churches, foundations, organizations and individuals who are unable to make the five-year mentoring commitment. A total of $2.6 million has been committed to date.

In addition, high school students who earn a mark below C in a subject get after-school tutoring at the program's Academic Center. All students attend regular workshops on study skills, writing and personal development; later on they participate in PSAT preparation and career exploration, and, in the eleventh grade, on SAT preparation, college search and help with college applications, financial aid requests and essays. There are also workshops for parents and mentors; bus trips to visit colleges; placement in summer enrichment programs offering education, employment, travel, career exploration visits to workplaces and numerous group social events.

Throughout college—which may be a two-year, four-year or occasionally a technical training institution—the students may call an 800 number at the Sponsor-A-Scholar office for consultation or intervention in problem situations. They also receive a regular newsletter on activities and accomplishments and attend group events at holiday breaks and an annual conference each January for parents, students, sponsors and mentors. The $6,000 is disbursed each semester as part of keeping in touch, and its budgeting is discussed with a Sponsor-A-Scholar counselor ahead of time.

To date, the results have been impressive. According to a Commonwealth-funded evaluation of Sponsor-A-Scholar by Amy Johnson (1998), the program has a significant impact on achievement in the tenth and eleventh grades and on college attendance during the first two years; 85 percent of participating seniors

entered college right after graduation and 73 percent of them began their second year of college. In the twelfth grade and after the second year of college, achievement and attendance did not vary from those of the general population. Only 38 percent of college freshmen nationwide graduate in four years, Kahn said.

"I don't think I'd even still be in school without the program's support."

Corinne Jones, coordinator of the class of 1997 since 1993 said, "All my kids graduated and all but one went to college. Each year the kids go further and further away, to more competitive schools: MIT, Cornell, Bucknell, the University of Wisconsin. A few are struggling, but most are doing well. They're so proud!" Perry Robinson, whose students are now juniors in college said: "Five out of my 29 interrupted their schooling—for the army, motherhood and academic problems. They may be back!" All the coordinators with students now in college agreed that they need a great deal of support once there. Kahn said that aspect of the program is now being strengthened.

Interviews with students at various stages of the program indicated the wide range of specific assistance and general support provided by both the mentors and class coordinators. Krystal, now a student at Bucknell University said, "[My mentor] made me feel less negative. When I had trouble with geometry in tenth grade, she was supportive, and the program got me tutored. My parents just hollered at me. When [my mentor] encouraged me to think about better colleges, the program told us to do community service work and extracurricular activities as a way to improve our chances. And then they helped me with my community service project—a Valentine's Day party for the Girl Scouts."

Travis, graduating in the class of 1998, said, "I was just thinking of getting a job, that's all. But after hanging around with Rich and his wife [Travis's mentors], I saw there were other things to do in life. I applied to seven colleges and got into five. I don't think I'd even still be in school without the program's support."

Lamel, who is bursting with energy and, according to her mentor, has difficulty staying focused, said, "My coordinator calls me a lot to ask me to do things. Go places and see things. I've met so many people. It helped me to learn to talk, that is, not to talk too much. And it helped me change high schools, leave the one that was really bad. Now I have lots more real academic work to do and know I'll get scholarships for college."

Kareem, who comes from a very strict home, said, "I feel more comfortable in the world now. I've gotten into sports, and we even discuss political and social issue stuff."

Ebony, class of 1998 said, "My family does nothing with me; they're too busy working. So I'm always alone. With [my mentor] I've gone to the opera, to restaurants—we do everything together. She helped me with my college essay—it was a mess. And she was the only person to call me from home last summer when I was in Ecuador with the Experiment in International Living."

Marlon, also in the class of 1998, said of his mentor, "He widened my options for college—showed me I didn't have to go just for the cheapest. I hope the program is around long enough to help my children as much as it helped me."

Sponsor-A-Scholar has made the basic model—mentoring, academic support and a financial incentive—available for adaptation by other communities. The 12 current "members" of the Sponsor-A-Scholar Network each structure the program differently; some are connected with community foundations, some with school districts. To all, the Philadelphia office provides consultation, technical assistance, invitations to the annual meeting and program materials. "We are converting the Network into a membership organization," Kahn said.

The Network members are in Amarillo, Texas; Albany, New York; Warminster, Chester County and Upper Darby, Pennsylvania; Oak Park, Illinois; Wilmington, Delaware; Lawrenceville, New Jersey; Spartanburg, South Carolina; Houston, Texas; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS: THE HIGHLY STRUCTURED ONE-TO-ONE MODEL

The Big Brothers Big Sisters one-to-one model of mentoring—a young person and an exhaustively screened adult meeting for several hours weekly in pursuit of general youth development goals (competence, confidence and caring)—is still referred to in the field as the "traditional" model. But BBBS programming has become anything but traditional. It is innovating in all directions: high school students mentoring and tutoring younger students at school; matches that are made and meet at colleges and corporations; programs for children with developmental disabilities and siblings of children with special needs; twice-a-month group programs for kids on the waiting list; matching of one adult with several young people; and a variety of flexible programs with reduced meeting time requirements.

"There is no way we could meet our goal of doubling the number of BBBS mentoring relationships (125,500 in 1997) by 2001 with the traditional model alone. That would require an unrealistic $230 million a year, even if we could find the mentors," declared Thomas J. McKenna, national executive director. "This way, I'm optimistic," he said. So far, 108 of the BBBS network of 507 agencies are operating 200 school-based programs in which students in one classroom and mentors from one corporation or public agency meet twice a month; 70 agencies are operating high school "Bigs" programs in which high school students are matched with middle school students and meet during the day at school. Individual agencies around the county have embarked on innovations of their own—with the national office's blessing, of course.

Typical of these innovators is BBBS of Long Island, which serves the two counties east of New York City—170 square miles, 2.5 million people, 100 school districts. Their headquarters is in a cheerful white building with a bright blue lettered sign at the end of a curving street of the small saltbox-type houses that say "Levittown" to the world.

"We had 200 traditional matches in the 1980s," said executive director William Tymann, "but the times and family pressures, the problems of geography and the need to grow have changed things." Viola Quintero, director of services, put it this way: "It's crucial to put mentoring in kid's lives, no matter what the pattern is. We need to find the great people and then find more ways to use them than working with one kid for years and years. We don't even count the long-term matches any more."

The types of matches this agency maintains run the gamut and are viewed by the agency as an evolving process that continues to range widely:

- Sixty are traditional matches, paid for by funds from the two county youth boards, fundraising events and contributions from individuals. Twenty of them are in the Sibling Support Program, funded by the state Office of Family Support Services, which provides support and respite for children with a disabled child in the family, and others among the 60 are disabled themselves (Viola Quintero: "We want to help the kids most in need by matching them with the few volunteers we have.")
- Ninety are one-to-one matches between high school and younger students in nine school districts, funded by state legislators' "member item grants." Forty schools have

participated in this program since 1979. The mentors, at least 16 years old, are screened, trained and matched with students identified by teachers as needing extra help. The pairs meet at school for social, play and sports activities. One of the school districts, with social problems severe enough to put it close to the "performing poorly" category that spells state takeover, is innovating even further with two state-funded models developed by the BBBS case manager and school administrators. In one, high school juniors and seniors are matched with freshmen and sophomores in academic trouble. The older student sits with the younger one in the class giving the most trouble and in an enrichment class after school. The upperclass student explains things the younger one does not understand and reviews content later. Ninth-grader Yvonne told a visitor that she was having trouble with biology and referred herself to the program. "Now I'm not just passing, I'm doing well. And I have a very good friend." Her mentor leaves class at test time, Yvonne explained.

"The point is not only to generate funds, but to become so visible in the community that we generate much more programming."

The second new program is peer mentoring—The Sisters' Network—created to counteract the negative interaction among girls the BBBS staff member has observed at the school. The group does exercises that explore commonalities and differences, works with fifth graders who have reading and writing problems, publishes a newsletter and recruits mentors for other BBBS programs.

- High School Clubs, funded by state and BBBS funds serve 150 to 200 youth. They serve younger latch-key kids, kids needing help with speaking English and kids that must stay in school until 5:30p.m. After meeting six or seven times in group activities, the high schools begin to match pairs for one-to-one relationships.
- Three programs involve college students: In one, 14 middle school youth are bussed one afternoon a week to the campus to meet with their Big Brother or Sister; in another, a group of college students go to an elementary school to meet with youth with whom they will eventually be paired; and in the third, 13 college students go once a week to a family services agency to meet with 14-year-olds in an after-school program—this, too, may evolve into a one-to-one program.

On the drawing board is a project Bill Tymann projects for implementation in 18 months: a Mentor Center in each of the two counties, open after school, in evenings and on weekends to parents and their children. It will be staffed by part-time professionals, student interns and adult volunteers screened as Bigs, who would provide services to parents—such as abuse and neglect prevention, legal and tax assistance, counseling and career development—while offering to their children one-to-one and group mentoring, art and recreation groups, special groups for children with special problems and their siblings, counseling, community service and career development. "We also want to develop the clout to convince CBOs to stay open nights and weekends, too," Tymann said.

Develop clout? Tymann's intention is to make BBBS a force in the community by doubling services in 1998 and tripling them by 1999. How? BBBS of Long Island is one of more than a dozen network agencies that have developed a partnership with Thrift Village, Inc. (TVI), a national organization that telemarkets for clothing and small household item donations. BBBS of Long Island now has eight trucks, its name emblazoned on the sides, that each visit 120 homes a day to leave a BBBS appeal for volunteers and collect donated goods. The trucks then take the goods to a warehouse from which TVI removes them and pays BBBS by volume. Tymann said:

"The point is not only to generate funds, but to become so visible in the community that we generate much more programming—get more mentors and establish more partnerships. Since the TVI program began in August, we have had a 25 to 35 percent increase in inquiries about mentoring."

Additional variations on the theme being piloted around the country were described by McKenna. They include five school-based mentoring programs that match adult or high

school aged mentors with elementary school children, meeting one hour a week at school and engaging in activities suggested by the child's teacher; pair senior citizens in two Florida communities, one with traditional matches and one in which one of the 19 mentors is working with an entire fifth-grade class, supported by The Retirement Research Foundation; and expand the five-year-old program for hearing-impaired youth and volunteers to encompass matches with other handicaps. BBBS is also developing alliances with such organizations as Boys & Girls Clubs and churches, which will provide both the youth and the volunteers, and has established mentoring training centers in 13 cities where personnel from other organizations learn to do mentoring. "We can't do it all," McKenna said, "but we can help the field grow."

Finally, he said, BBBS is instituting more efficient, cost-effective ways of working. These include using teachers to do case management part time in the evening, having the largest agencies expand and use their resources more widely, modifying the mentor application process to make it less intrusive and faster to complete, and reducing the weekly meeting requirement. "The research shows two things," McKenna said, "that volunteers are initially daunted and some may be turned away by the time required, but that no matter what the requirement is, mentors end up spending many hours each week with their youth and stay with them for years."

"I feel more comfortable in the world now."

Back at BBBS of Long Island, Bill Tymann reflected on the many changes and new mentoring patterns he and his network colleagues are making: "I've been at this for 18 years and feel like we're just beginning." A fitting epigram for this volume.

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Mentoring is only as good as the relationships that develop.

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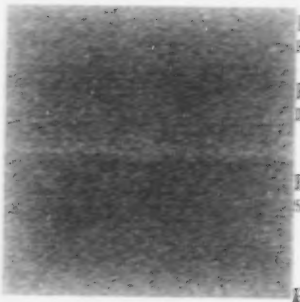

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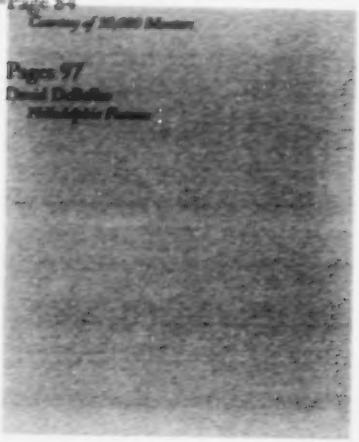

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